

Friendship in Death.

Volume I.

A

F

LET

B

AT 7

FRIENDSHIP IN DEATH.

IN

TWENTY LETTERS

FROM THE

DEAD TO THE LIVING.

TO WHICH ARE ADDED,

LETTERS MORAL AND ENTERTAINING,

IN PROSE AND VERSE :

IN THREE PARTS.

BY MRS ELISABETH ROWE.

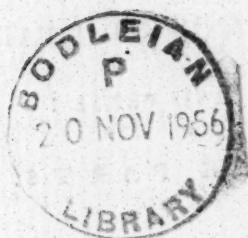
IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1776.



S
I H
b
plea
from
and
of J
T
any v
prof
conc
enter
hours
plove

TO
DR. YOUNG.

SIR,

I HAVE no design in this Dedication but to express my gratitude for the pleasure and advantage I have received from your Poem *on the Last Judgment*, and the *Paraphrase on Part of the Book of Job*.

The Author of these Letters is above any view of interest, and can have no prospect of reputation, resolving to be concealed: but if they prove a serious entertainment to persons whose leisure hours are not always innocently employed, the end is fully answered.

The greatest Infidel must own there is at least as much probability in this scheme as in that of the *Fairy Tales*, which, however visionary, are some of them moral and entertaining.

I am,

SIR,

Your most humble servant, &c.

T
with
their
quen

So
about
doubt
thoug
lian

But
attemp
I hope
miliar v
ence, a
an habi

re
his
es,
of

T H E

P R E F A C E.

THE drift of these Letters is to impress the notion of the soul's immortality; without which all virtue and religion, with their temporal and eternal good consequences, must fall to the ground.

, &c.

Some, who pretend to have no scruples about the being of a God, have yet their doubts about their own eternal existence, though valuable authors abound in Christian and moral proofs of it,

But, since no means should be left unattempted in a point of such importance, I hope endeavouring to make the mind familiar with the thoughts of our future existence, and contract, as it were, unawares, an habitual persuasion of it, by writings

built on that foundation, and addressed to the affections and imagination, will not be thought improper either as a doctrine or amusement; *amusement*, for which the World makes by far the largest demand, and which, generally speaking, is nothing but an art of forgetting that immortality, the firm belief and advantageous contemplation of which *this* amusement would recommend.

L

T
Th
ship
ente
him
hero
the c
tality

From A
his fr
of the
occasi
script
first e

THE
CONTENTS
OF THE
FIRST VOLUME.

LETTERS from the DEAD to the LIVING.

LETTER I.

TO the Earl of R——, from Clerimont, who had promised to appear to him after his death. The purport of this epistle is to draw his Lordship from that contemptible idea which he had entertained of all things sacred, and to convince him, from the particular instance of his brother's heroic deportment in the agonies of death, of the certainty of a future state, and the immortality of the soul.

From p. 25—28

LETTER II.

From Altamont, who died at Constantinople, to his friend in England, giving him an account of the manner of his death, and the principal occasion of it; concluding with a pathetic description of his infinitely more happy state on his first entrance into another world.

28—30

LETTER III.

To the Countess of * * * *, from Narcissus, her only son and heir, who died when he was but two years old. This is a consolatory epistle, representing, in the most endearing terms, the unreasonableness of her grief; since all the earthly grandeur, to which he was entitled by his birth, was but pageantry and farce in comparison with the innate dignity of his immortal state, and the glories to which he was advanced. From p. 30—33.

LETTER IV.

To my Lord * * * * from Ethelinda, a young lady, who, though deeply in love with him, chose rather to die in a convent than to make her escape from that holy retreat to which her most solemn vows had confined her. 34—36

LETTER V.

To * * * *, from Junius, giving his friend, according to promise, a description of the planetary worlds, and the inhabitants of those happy regions. 36—38

LETTER VI.

From Amanda to * * * *, acknowledging her virtue, though passionately beloved by her husband, who, upon hearing of her marriage with one Montandre, resolved to make away with him.

C O N T E N T S.

xi

Yelf, and fell on his sword accordingly, leaving behind him an only daughter, friendless, and exposed to the wide world. The motive of this letter is to beg of her friend to take the charge of her poor orphan, and her infant innocence.

From p. 38—40

L E T T E R VII.

To Emilia, from Delia, giving her a beautiful description of the invisible regions, and the happy state of the inhabitants of Paradise. 41—43

L E T T E R VIII.

To * * * *, from Amintor, in which he first acknowledges, with gratitude, her sincere passion for him, and her readiness to attend him in his last voyage to Spain; and then relates how he lost his life in her defence, in that unfortunate engagement with an Algerine Corsair, wherein she was taken a prisoner, and afterwards made a slave to a Bassa. The purport of the remaining part of the letter is to dissuade her from the rash resolution which she had taken to poison him, for the preservation of her chastity; and to induce her rather to submit to the dispensations of Divine Providence, who, in reward to her virtue, would find out some means or other for her escape. 43—46

L E T T E R IX.

To Sylvia, from Alexis. The intention of this letter is to inform her, that she is the natural

daughter of a person of quality, and not the real issue of her supposed parents, and to forewarn her of the danger that attended her, in listening to the addresses of the Lord * * * *, who, in reality, was her own brother.

From p. 46—50

LETTER X.

To Leonora, from Clerimont, her guardian, who, though violently in love with her, chose rather to die than dishonourably to seduce her, her fortune being vastly superior to his own. The motive of this letter is to assure her, that the virtuous after death are in a state of perfection and happiness, and to forewarn her, as she was now under her brother's care, of his dissolute and licentious manners, and of the thousand dangers to which, through his means, her virtue would be exposed.

50—53

LETTER XI.

Another to the same; in which he first congratulates her on her recovery from a dangerous fit of sickness, and then discovers the disingenuous behaviour, and perfidiousness of one of her brother's profligate companions, who made his addresses to her, though privately married to a young lady, whom he had ungratefully abandoned to misery and despair.

54, 55

LETTER XII.

From Cleander to his brother, endeavouring to reclaim him from his extravagancies, by giving

CONTENTS.

xiii

him a full account of the cowardly manner in which one of his dissolute atheistical companions resigned his life in a foreign country; concluding with some pathetic reprehensions of his ill conduct. From p. 55—59

LETTER XIII.

To Climene, from * * *, giving her timely warning to shun the addresses of the perfidious Alcander, to whose vows and protestations if she once listened she was ruined beyond redemption. 59—61

LETTER XIV.

From * * *, to his sister, demonstrating the unreasonable-ness of her grief on account of his sudden death; since it was an immediate transition to a state of immortality and endless bliss. 62, 63

LETTER XV.

From Philander to Henrietta, giving her an account of his being drowned in his voyage to the Indies; of his passage through the mighty waters to the planetary regions; and of his progress from thence to the mansions of the blessed; whose pleasures are everlasting, unutterable, and beyond description. 64, 65

LETTER XVI.

To my Lord * * *, from Serena, persuading him not to imagine that all apparitions are the result
Volume I. B

only of fear and fancy; to listen to her advice, and make preparation for his death, since in a few weeks his last hour would infallibly be determined.

From p. 65—67

LETTER XVII.

From Ibrahim, a Turkish Bassa, to Philocles, acknowledging that he was the principal instrument of his conversion to the Christian faith, and desiring him to ransom a beautiful Grecian slave, whom he had seduced in his lifetime, and prevailed on to renounce her most holy religion.

67—70

LETTER XVIII.

From the deceased Eusebius to his son, charging him to retract a challenge which he had sent to Lindamor, his generous friend, whose sincerity was his only crime; and not shamefully to espouse the cause of a licentious beauty, who had neither virtue nor reputation to defend.

70—73

LETTER XIX.

To my Lord ****, from Mariana, his deceased wife, persuading him to be just to his obligations to the injured Sylviana, and to set bounds to those vicious inclinations which he had indulged since her death without reluctance and controul.

73—76

LETTER XX.

From Theodosius to Varrius, dissuading him from the pursuit of an amour with the beautiful Cleora,

CONTENTS.

xv

which, as she was the wife of his generous benefactor, must inevitably plunge her into guilt and infamy, and brand himself with the ignominious character of being perfidious and ungrateful to the best of friends. From p. 76—78

THOUGHTS ON DEATH,

Translated from the Moral Essays of M^{rs} de
Du Port Royal. 79—83.

LETTERS MORAL and ENTERTAINING.

PART I.

LETTER I.

FROM Philario to Chamont, giving a particular
account of his unhappy amour with Amasia.
From p. 85—91

LETTER II.

From Cassander to a gentleman at Venice, relating
all the aggravating circumstances of a barbarous
murder which he committed in a fit of jealousy
on an imaginary rival; and describing, in the
most pathetic terms, his remorse of conscience
for such a flagrant violation of the laws of
Friendship and Humanity. 91—95

LETTER III.

To Belinda, from Sylvia, ingenuously confessing that a guilty passion was the real cause of her sudden retirement into the country, and relating the particular manner of her avoiding the fatal effects of it, and the ineffable satisfaction which she found in the secret approbation of her own conduct.

From p. 96—101

See the continuation of her story in Vol. II. page 29—36

LETTER IV.

To Eusebius, from Philander, acknowledging the obligations he had laid him under, by working a reformation both in his principles and manners. In this letter is introduced a beautiful Rhapsody, inscribed, *To the unknown God*.

102—105

LETTER V.

To Mrs * * *, from Amoret, giving an account of her criminal passion for Sebastian; and describing, in the most moving terms, the manner in which he seduced her, and her remorse of conscience on the reflection of her ill conduct.

105—108

LETTER VI.

To my Lord * * *, from Evander, demonstrating the vast advantages of a virtuous man over a Libertine, supposing his expectations of future bliss

From Celad
having sed

CONTENTS.

xvii

should prove a fiction, and Christianity should be nothing more than a mere delusion.

From p. 108—113

LETTER VII.

From Herminius to his sister, acquainting her, that he had once a criminal passion for Cleora; but that her soft and engaging behaviour towards Philaret her husband, and her just neglect of all his amorous addresses to her, had made him a proselyte to Virtue.

114—117

LETTER VIII.

From Bellamour to Carlos, relating the story of his passion for Almeda, and the unexpected interruption of his happiness, by a rash offer of his services to another lady, in hopes of being rejected.

118—121

See the continuation of his story in Vol. II. page 84—90

LETTER IX.

To Philario, from the Duke of ***, reflecting, with the utmost reluctance and remorse, in the agonies of death, on his mispent life, and his open violation of all things sacred.

122—125

LETTER X.

From Celadon to Amasia, reproaching her with having seduced him into a criminal conversation

B 3

with her, notwithstanding the infinite obligations he lay under to her husband, who was his guardian, benefactor, and best of friends.

From p. 125—129

LETTER XI.

To my Lord * * * *, from Philander, on the pleasures of retirement, and the vanity of riches and the most illustrious titles; in which is introduced a beautiful soliloquy, addressed to the great Spirit of Nature.

129—134

LETTER XII.

To Myrtillo, from Leander, a physician, giving him an account of his falling in love with a fair stranger in the country; in which is introduced a poetical description of the place where he first saw her, and of the goddesses he adored.

135—137

LETTER XIII.

Another to the same, giving an account of his mistress's illness, his accidental attendance on her, her contempt of all earthly enjoyments, and her last dying words, which had made too deep an impression on his mind ever to be erased.

137—140

LETTER XIV.

From Myrtillo to Hermione, giving her an account of her brother's passion for her; the severe obligations her father laid him under of seeing her

CONTENTS.

xix

no more; his passive obedience to those paternal injunctions, and his death, which was consequent thereupon. From p. 140—144

LETTER XV.

From **** to ****, acknowledging that the virtues of some heathens were very surprising, and that his friend had in his letter set them in a very fair and advantageous light. In return, he sends his friend, inclosed, a beautiful Hymn to the Name of Jesus, in opposition to the most accomplished of his Pagan heroes. 144—147

LETTER XVI.

From Lady Jane Gray to Lord Guilford Dudley. A poetical farewell. 147—149

LETTER XVII.

From his Lordship to the Princess. An affectionate poetical answer to the foregoing. 149—151

LETTER XVIII.

From Albanus to Mrs * * * *, assuring the Lady that she had wrought a wonderful reformation in him, and convinced him that Virtue was more than an empty name, was a sacred reality, and that the goddess shone brightest when she put on the royal form of our late Queen Caroline. 151, 152

LETTERS TO CLEORA.

LETTER I.

FROM * * * *, to Cleora. On the pleasures of retirement. Page 153, 154

LETTER II.

From * * * * to the same, complaining of the shortness of her last epistle. 155

LETTER III.

From * * * * to the same, excusing her neglect of writing, since she had no entertaining subject in her retirement to enlarge upon. 156

LETTER IV.

From * * * * to the same, acknowledging the favour of her last; and assuring her that, in her opinion, Death would have a dismal view, if an immortality beyond it did not brighten the scene. 157, 158

LETTER V.

From * * * * to the same, confessing that her reflections on Death were very just; and that she was glad to find her return to a subject which most of her sex endeavour to avoid. 158, 159

CONTENTS.

xxi

LETTER VI.

From * * * * to the same, assuring her, that she had nothing remarkable to communicate; and that she lived as retired as those who sleep in their graves.

Page 160, 161

LETTER VII.

From * * * * to the same, assuring her that, as her thoughts on this world and the next are so just, she compassionates her manner of life; concluding with this moral reflection, that all our eager pursuits after earthly enjoyments are no more than the amusing ourselves with a vain succession of shadows.

161, 162

LETTER VIII.

From * * * * to the same, acknowledging, that the principal motive of her writing is to extort an answer; having nothing to entertain herself with, much less her friend.

163

LETTERS TO THE AUTHOR.

LETTER I.

TO the Author, from Cleora, confessing, that though the thoughts of death might be serene and agreeable enough to some, yet it was with reluctance she parted with any thing here be-

low; and dreaded to enter on a world unknown,
from whence none return to tell us what they
find it. Page 164, 165

L E T T E R II.

To the same, discommending her living always a
recluse, and giving her an invitation to Town.
165—167

L E T T E R III.

To the same, giving her an account how she em-
ploys her time in her garden, and inviting her
to her country-seat. 167, 168.

L E T T E R IV.

To the same, on the vanity of all sublunary en-
joyments. 168, 169

L E T T E R V.

To the same, lamenting the loss of my Lord * * * *,
a sincere friend, an honest man, and an agree-
able companion; concluding with serious reflec-
tions on the advantages of his change. 170, 171

L E T T E R VI.

From Iris to Clarinda, assuring her, that the irre-
gularity of her passions is the true cause of her
melancholy; that her thoughts and actions are
inconsistent, since she cannot forbear pursuing
the pleasures of the world, though she knows
them to be fleeting and worthless. 171—173

From H
death
histo
her H

From A
of he
portu

From D
of he
and a
health
the sin
afford

From Bel
history

See the con

CONTENTS.

xxiii

LETTER VII.

From Emilia to Almira, giving her an account of the death of the unhappy Teraminta, with the secret history of her criminal passion for Alonzo, one of her husband's dependents. From p. 173—178

LETTER VIII.

From Anastasia to the Lord * * * *, informing him of her retreat to a convent to avoid his importunities. 178—180

LETTER IX.

From Diana to Leonora, giving her an account of her recovery from a tedious fit of sickness, and a lively description of the pleasures of health; concluding with serious reflections on the small consolations which earthly enjoyments afford us upon a deathbed. 180—184

LETTER X.

From Bellamour to Lyfander, giving him the secret history of Rosella and Alphonso. 183—189

See the continuation of her story in Vol. II. page 62—65

L

D

To the E
pr

T
you the
fired, an
gagemen
you must
ceased fr
ed beyon
In my
place of
appointm
make m
if you h
of a visi
the clock
no huma
lence; th
midnight
trees, wh
grove wh
I saw y
credulous
appeared

L E T T E R S

FROM THE

DEAD TO THE LIVING.

L E T T E R I.

*To the Earl of R * * * *, from Mr * * * *, who had
promised to appear to him after his death.*

THIS will find you, my Lord, confirmed in your infidelity by your late disappointment. It was not in my power to give you the evidence of a future state which you desired, and I had rashly promised; but since this engagement was a secret to every mortal but ourselves, you must be assured that this comes from your deceased friend, whose friendship, you see, has reached beyond the grave.

In my last sickness we fixed on the time and place of my appearance; you was punctual to the appointment: for though I was not permitted to make myself visible, I had the desire to know if you had the resolution to attend the solemnity of a visit from the Dead. The hour was come, the clock from a neighbouring steeple struck *one*, no human voice was heard to break the awful silence; the moon and stars shone clear in their midnight splendour, and glimmered through the trees, which, in lofty rows, led to the centre of a grove where I was engaged to meet you.

I saw you enter the walks with a careless incredulous air, not the least concern or expectation appeared in your looks; as if you came there on-

ly in regard to your own word, and a sort of respect to my memory: however, the calmness of the night induced you to walk till the morning began to break, when you retired, singing an idle song you had got out of the *Fairy Tales*. By the gaiety of your temper you seemed pleased, my Lord, with a new proof against a future life, and happy to find yourself (as you concluded) on a level with the beasts that perish.—A glorious advantage! and worthy of your triumph!

But we have so often discoursed on this subject, that I would not tire you with the repetition of any thing past; only once more, to make way to your reason, by moving your passions, in recollecting the manner of your brother's death, which was all a demonstration of the immortality of the soul, and to what heights of fortitude that prospect could raise the heart of man, at the hour of terror, and in the jaws of Death.

With what a ready composure did he endure the violence of his distemper! with what conviction and full assurance expect the reward of his piety! with what calmness, with what a graceful resignation, did he receive the sentence of death, when (at his importunity) the physicians told him there were no hopes of his recovery! "Then I have but a few weary steps," he replied, "and the journey of Life will be finished."

This was not a time for affectation; all was open undissembled goodness, and a true greatness of mind: nothing else could have supported him, when every circumstance of life conspired to allure him back to life, to deepen the shadows of the grave, and make the King of Terrors more terrible.

There was not, my Lord, among the race of men, a more lovely and agreeable person than your brother; his marriage was just concluded

with
noble
he wa
a last
ed to
her te
anguis
sister f
father
what c
licated
had all
sition,
not be
But how
becomi
ver was
ed with
was cle
very lar
same tin
near him
When
his breas
the decay
his face;
and accu
You, r
ment of l
of a futur
thought r
sole delu
attered t
much the
are them
all hope o
From th

with the charming Cleora, he had just finished a noble feat and fine gardens to receive her. When he was near death she came, at his request, to take a last and sad farewell; angels might have sorrowed to see tears in the brightest eyes on earth, while her tenderness for him would have disguised her anguish: this, with the sight of a fond young sister fainting in her woman's arms, your aged father sitting near, silent and stupid with his grief: what could support the mind of man in such complicated distress? The accomplished youth, who had all that was gentle and humane in his disposition, must have betrayed some weakness, if he had not been assisted by a power superior to nature. But how equal, how steady, was his mind! how becoming, how graceful, his whole behaviour! never was the last, the closing, part of life performed with more decency and grandeur: his reason was clear and elevated, and his words were the very language of immortality, and excited at the same time both pity and envy in those that were near him.

When the cold sweats hung on his brows, and his breath and speech failed, joy struggled thro' the decay of Nature, and a heavenly smile sat on his face; a smile that at once compelled our tears, and accused us of weakness in them.

You, my Lord, attended him to the last moment of life; and, when I pressed this argument of a future state, you confessed, that though you thought religion a delusion, it was the most agreeable delusion in the world; and that men who flattered themselves with those gay visions had much the advantage of those that saw nothing before them but a gloomy uncertainty, or the dreadful hope of an annihilation.

From this uncertainty I was very solicitous to

draw you, while I was in a mortal state; but I have now a more ardent desire to convince you, though I cannot obtain the permission to give you that evidence you requested: however, this letter may satisfy you that I am in a state of existence; nor is an apparition from the Dead a greater miracle than a variety of objects that daily surround you, and owe the loss of their effect to your familiarity with them.

Happy minds in this superior state are still concerned for the welfare of mortals, and make a thousand kind visits to their friends; to whom, if the laws of the immaterial worlds did not forbid, it would be easy to make themselves visible, by the splendour of their own vehicles, and the command they have on the powers of material things, and the organs of sight: it often seems a miracle to us that you do not perceive us; for we are not absent from you by *places*, but by the different condition of the *states* we are in.

You will find this in your closet, and may be assured it comes from

Your constant

And immortal friend,

CLERIMONT

LETTER II.

From a gentleman who died at Constantinople, to his friend in England, giving him an account of his death.

YOUR not hearing from me, my dear Beville, has given you too many dismal apprehensions about the manner of my death; and the engagements of a generous friendship, which are not extinguished with the breath of life, obliged me to give you this satisfaction.

I made a longer stay at Constantinople than I intended, and there it pleased Heaven that I should resign my life, which, for some months, gradually declined, but without any violent or painful disorder, or indeed the least apprehension that my distemper was fatal: but my days were numbered; and when the destined hour drew near, after a sleepless night I rose with the sun; and, as I had never been so ill as to confine myself, I sought some refreshment in one of those delicious gardens that adorn the shores of the Bosphorous.

After a short walk I found my spirits sinking, and, retiring to a cypress shade, I threw myself on a flowery bank for some refreshment: a gentle slumber soon closed my eyes, which was thrice broken by what I then thought an imaginary call; the voice perfectly resembled the charming Almeria's, whose death, you know, was the occasion of my travels. I was now perfectly awake, and listening to hear the gentle summons again; but found I had neither strength to rise, nor power to call assistance: an icy coldness stopped the springs of life, and after a little struggle, my spirit got unburthened of its clay; the curtain fell, and the invisible world appeared. The first gentle spirit that welcomed me to these new regions was the lovely Almeria; but how dazzling! how divinely fair! ecstasy was in her eyes, and inexpressible pleasure in every smile! her mien and aspect more soft and propitious than ever was signified by poets of their goddess of Beauty and Love: what was airy fiction *there*, was *here* all transporting reality. With an inimitable grace she received me in to her ethereal chariot, which was sparkling sapphire studded with gold; it rolled with a spontaneous motion along the heavenly plains, and stopped at the Morning Star, our de-

finest habitation. But how shall I describe this fair, this fragrant, this enchanting land of Love! the delectable vales and flowery lawns, the myrtle shades and rosy bowers; the bright cascades and crystal rivulets rolling over orient pearls and sands of gold, which here spread their silent waves into broad transparent lakes, smooth as the face of Heaven, and there break with rapid force thro' arching rocks of diamond and purple amethyst; plants of immortal verdure creep up the sparkling cliffs, and adorn the prospect with unspeakable variety.

Oh, my Beville! could I lead you through the luxurious bowers and soft recesses where Pleasure keeps its eternal festivals, and revels with guiltless and unmolested freedom! whatever can raise desire, whatever can give delight, whatever can satisfy the soul in all the boundless capacities of joy, is found here! every wish is replenished with full draughts of vital pleasure, such as elevate angelic minds, and gratify the noblest faculties of immortal spirits. Oh, Beville! my Almeria is as much superior to her former self here as I thought her superior to the rest of her sex upon earth.

ALTAMONT.

LETTER III.

*To the Countess of * * * *, from her only son, who died when he was two years old.*

YOUR grief is an allay to my happiness: the only sentiment my infant state was conscious of was a fondness for you, which was then pure instinct and natural sympathy, but is now gratitude and filial affection. As soon as my spirit was re-

leased from its uneasy confinement, I found myself an active and reasonable being; I was transported at the advantage and superior manner of my existence: the first reflection I made was on my lovely benefactor, for I knew you in that relation in my infant state; but I was surprised to see you weeping over the little breathless form from which I thought myself so happily delivered, as if you had lamented my escape. The fair proportion, the agility, the splendour, of the new vehicle that my spirit now informed was so blessed an exchange, that I wondered at your grief; for I was so little acquainted with the difference of material and immaterial bodies, that I thought myself as visible to your sight as you was to mine. I was exceedingly moved at your tears, but was ignorant why, unless because your's was the most beautiful face, next my guardian angel's, I had ever seen; and that you resembled some of the gay forms that used to recreate my guiltless slumbers, and smile on me in gentle dreams: I was then ignorant of your maternal relation to me, but remembered that you had been my refuge in all the little distresses of which I had but a faint notion. I left you unwillingly in the height of your calamity, to follow my radiant guide to a place of tranquillity and joy, where I met thousands of happy spirits of my own order, who informed me of the history of my native world, for whose inhabitants I have a peculiar benevolence, and cannot help interesting myself in their welfare: but as I never discerned between good and evil, nor experienced the motives that governed the race of men, I am, I confess, astonished at their conduct, and find their joys and sorrows to be all strange and unaccountable. I have made visits to the lower world since my decease; the first that I made

was from a tender concern to know if you was satisfied with the disposal of Heaven in my early fate; but I was surpris'd to find, after several months were past your grief oppress'd every thought, and clouded all the joys of your life, which made me very inquisitive into my own history. I asked the Celestial who was your attendant why I was so much lamented, and of what consequence my life would have been to the public or my own family, since those fair eyes were yet drowned in tears for one that had made such a short and insignificant appearance below? As for the public, the gentle minister told me, there was a hazard I might have proved a blessing or curse; but that I was the only hope of an illustrious family, and heir to a vast estate and distinguished title; and pointing to a coat of arms, told me *that* was the badge of my dignity; the noble seat we had in view, with the gardens, fields, the woods and parks that surrounded it, were all my entail'd possession. A goodly possession! I replied, and proper for the four-footed animals that I behold feeding on the verdant pasture! but of what use these fields and woods had been to one that had an immortal spirit I cannot conceive; and for a title, what happiness could an airy syllable, an empty sound, bring with it? The coat of arms I took for such a toy, that if burlesque had not been beneath the dignity of an angel, I should have thought the mentioning it a ridicule on mortal men. I cannot conceive wherein the charm, the gratification, of these things consist: if I were possessor of the whole earthly globe, what use could I make of this gross element, the dregs of the creation! I have no dependance on water, or fire, on earth, or air; it is unintelligible to me that hills and vallies, trees and rivers, the mines and ca-

verns
that
reason
fions
long
acquir
so litt
tance,
claime
though
So
stances
fun, th
farce c
which
glory,
and ple
the ear
If yo
the mo
me, yo
with for
ess thin
now in
tion of
and the
tread
the skies
ecure of
on the A
ountain
Pardon
infant, a
tenderne

governs under their feet, any more than the clouds that fly over their heads, should be the wealth of reasonable creatures : they may keep their possessions unenvied by me ; I am glad I did not live long enough to make so wrong a judgment, nor to acquire a relish for such low enjoyments. I am so little concerned for the loss of such an inheritance, that if the Black Prince of the airy regions claimed my share, I would not dispute his title, though he is my aversion and your foe.

So superior, Madam, are my present circumstances to that of the greatest monarch under the sun, that all earthly grandeur is pageantry and farce compared to the real, the innate, dignity which I now possess. I am advanced to celestial glory, and triumph in the heights of immortal life and pleasure, whence pity falls on the kings of the earth.

If you could conceive my happiness, instead of the mournful solemnity with which you interred me, you would have celebrated my funeral rites with songs and festivals. Instead of the thoughtless thing you lately smiled on and caressed, I am now in the perfection of my being, in the elevation of reason. Instead of a little extent of land, and the propriety of so much space to breathe in, I tread the starry pavement, make the circuit of the skies, and breathe the air of paradise. I am secure of eternal duration, and independent but on the Almighty, whom I love and adore, as the fountain of my being and blessedness.

Pardon me, Madam, it is you now seem the infant, and I repay you that superior regard and tenderness which you lately bestowed on me.

NARCISSUS.

LETTER IV.

*To my Lord * * *, from a young lady who was in a convent at Florence.*

MY Lord, finding materials in your closet, I took the opportunity of your absence to give you this intelligence of my death. The hand will convince you that it comes from your once loved Ethelinda.

I lived but a few weeks after you left Italy; such was the excess of my grief, though a strict modesty still forced me to conceal my unhappy passion from the most intimate companion I had. After I had discovered it to you, I durst confess the guilty secret to none but the compassionate and forgiving Powers above, who assisted my weakness, and confirmed my resolution, never to comply with any of those schemes you proposed to free me from my confinement. You had, indeed, convinced me that the vows I had made were rash and uncommanded! but, oh! it was past; saints and angels heard it, the all-seeing skies were invoked to witness the chaste engagement; it was sealed above, and entered in the records of Heaven. Thus hopele's was my passion! Perjury and Sacrilege stood in all their horrors before me, Ruin and eternal Perdition were betwixt us: and yet that I loved you, my Lord, I had too often subscribed to that soft confession to leave you any doubt of it; nor was the tender frailty without excuse, if all the merit man could boast, if every grace that Nature could give, or gentle Art improve, deserved distinction: it had been a crime to have been insensible in any circumstance but mine.—Strange circumstance! that could make it virtue to look coldly on you.

There was the emphasis of my misery, mine was a heart devoted to superior ardours, and sacred to Heaven alone; that Heaven, which is my impartial judge and witness how sincerely I strove to blot you from my soul. But neither reason, nor the nicest sense of honour, nor even devotion, could assist me; still you returned on my imagination triumphant in all your charms; hopeless of the conquest, I gave myself up to grief and despair, resolving never to attempt my escape from the holy retreat to which my vows had confined me, but rather to fall a victim to the sacred names of Chastity and Truth. Heaven accepted the sacrifice, and Death, my kind deliverer, at once released me from misery and mortality; the crystal gates opened a spacious entrance, and the blest immortals received me into the mansion of Life and Bliss.

Whatever was feigned of Elysian Fields, and Cyprian groves, is here without delusion surpassed; these are the imperial seats, the native dominions, of Love; here his holy torch flamed out with propitious splendour, and his golden shafts are dipt in immortal joys: here are no vows that tear us from our wishes, no conflict betwixt Passion and Virtue; what we like we admire, what we admire we enjoy, nor is it more our happiness than commendation to do.

That unhappy passion which was my torment and crime is now my glory and my boast: nothing selfish or irregular, nothing that needs restraint or disguise, mingles with the noble ardour; 'tis all calm and beneficent, becoming the dignity of reason, and the grandeur of an immortal mind, and is as lasting as its essence: when the lamps of heaven are quenched, when the sun has burnt out its splendour, this divine principle shall shine with undiminished lustre, the joy and triumph of the hea-

venly nations. The substance of love, my Lord, dwells in heaven, its shadow only is to be found upon earth.

ETHELINDA.

LETTER V.

To * * * *

YOU remember, as we were, on a clear summer evening, gazing on the beauty of the stars, I promised, if you survived me, to give you an account of the planetary worlds, and their inhabitants: I have not made half the tour of the skies, but will, if I can, describe to you the last of these novelties in which I entertained myself. It was in a region immense spaces distant from that system which is enlightened by your sun, and created numberless ages before the foundations of the earth were laid; and the measure thereof described before the Day-spring knew its place, and the bounds of Darkness were determined; before Man was formed of the ground, and the Almighty breathed into him a living soul: an unmeasurable duration before this the unlimited Creator had made and peopled millions of glorious worlds. The inhabitants of this which I am describing stood their probation, and are confirmed in their original rectitude, but will never be admitted into the empyrean Heaven, being incapable of that supreme degree of happiness which angels and the spirits of just men attain: however, they are exempt from all evil, blessed to the height of their faculties and conceptions, and are privileged with immortality. Their residence may properly be called the enchanted World; whatever you have heard fabric

of Fairy scenes, of vocal groves, and palaces rising to magic sounds, is all real here, and performed by the easy and natural operations of these active spirits. I have in an instant seen palaces ascend to a majestic height, sparkling as the stars, and transparent as the unclouded ether: I might describe them like the courtly Prophet; "Their walls were with fair colours, their foundations sapphire, the windows of agate, and the gates of carbuncle." Their materials here are all glittering and refined, not like the earthly globe, dark and heavy. These etherials are the nicest judges of symmetry and proportion; and, by the disposition of light and shade, and the mixture of a thousand dazzling colours, form the most charming prospects: they have such a command and knowledge of the powers of Nature, that in an instant they raise a variety of sylvan scenes, and carry the perspective through verdant avenues and flowery walks to an unmeasurable length; while living fountains cast up their silver spouts, and form glittering arches among the trees, of growth and verdure not to be expressed.

They are acquainted with all the utmost mysteries of sound, and are possessed with the very soul of Harmony: Art is theirs in all its changing notes, its blandishments and graces; whatever Nature can boast in her wild licentious charms is governed by them: the winding vales, the streams and groves, breathe music at their command: the nightingale and dying swan seem to complain to gentle zephyrs whispering through the trees, while a thousand airy songsters warble to the measured fall of high cascades; which, by intervals, sinking into a deep silence, after a graceful pause shrill recorders and silver trumpets sound, while harmless thunders roll above, and break with a

glorious solemnity: still the blissful tempest rises, and swells the mind to sacred grandeur and terrific elevation, till subdued and melted into softness by the melody of tuneful reeds, warbling lutes, and sweet enchanting voices of the Lydian strain.

The language of this charming region is perfectly musical and elegant, and becoming the fair inhabitants, who are fresh and rosy as the opening morning, clear as the meridian light, and fragrant as the breath of jessamin or new-blown roses. How exquisitely proportioned their shapes! their aspect how transporting! how gentle, how charming, beyond all the race of mortal men! never did the eyelids of the Morning open on such perfection; never did the sun, since first it journeyed through the skies, behold such beauty, nor can human Fancy, in its most inspired flights, conceive such amiable wonders.

Perhaps, in all my planetary rambles, I shall not be able to give you an account of any objects more surprising: but while I am permitted I shall continue my intelligence to the most agreeable friend I had on earth; and, be assured, when you are released from mortality, you will meet, in spite of distance of time and place, (those mortal foes to love upon earth),

Your constant and unchanged

JUNIUS.

L E T T E R VI.

To * * * * *

MY dear sister, though the engagements of Nature are cancelled, the superior oblig-

tions
have
rules
seque
husba
With
ty inc
plaint
your m
govern
nour a
not ha
from m
would
deathb
to recla
ty, if I
to conv
was fin
a slight
incestuo
last the t
that he
illustriou
unnatura
formed i
spent par
men of w
was all in
dispose of
when it w
He return
than usua
for a you
him. Tak
infant smi
when he w

tions of Virtue remain in their full force. You have been faithful to my memory, and the strict rules of piety, though it has proved of fatal consequence to the unhappy man who was lately my husband, and, by that relation, a brother to you. With inward grief and compassion I saw the guilty inclination, but never uttered the least complaint, nor gave him one uneasy moment. I knew your mind as faultless as your form, and saw you governed in all your conduct by conscious Honour and unblemished Virtue: Envy itself could not have reproached you with the least deviation from modesty and truth; nor was the promise I would have extorted from the guilty youth on my deathbed the effect of jealousy, but a kind design to reclaim him, and free you from his importunity, if I could have engaged him, as I desired, not to converse with you after my decease; but he was sincere enough to refuse me; and, as soon as a slight formality would suffer him, he pursued his incestuous passion. Your obstinate repulses have at last the tragical effect I expected. From the moment that he heard the day of your marriage with the illustrious Montandre was set he resolved on the unnatural fact; and never was self-murder performed in a more calm and deliberate manner: he spent part of the evening with two of his friends, men of wit and learning; his discourse with them was all intended to prove the right a man has to dispose of his life, and put an end to his being, when it was rather his burthen than happiness. He returned to his house in a more early hour than usual, and, retiring to his chamber, called for a young and only daughter that I had left him. Taking her in his arms, while the lovely infant smiled on him tears dropped from his eyes: when he would have blessed it, the unbelieving

prayer faltered on his tongue; and, delivering the child to its nurse, he ordered his servants to deny him to all company. As soon as he was alone he wrote that moving letter which you received; when he had finished and sealed it, he took a Lucretius from the table, and read and paused by intervals; at last, looking on his watch, just at *two* he fastened his chamber-door, and drew his sword, repeating the following lines, which I wish had never been writ, as, I assure you, does the author of them too:

Here's a quick relief
 'To all thy vain imaginary grief!
 For thou shalt sleep, and never wake again,
 And, quitting life, shalt quit thy living pain;
 'The worst that can befall thee, measur'd right,
 Is a sound slumber, and a long good night.

Then directing the point exactly to his heart, he fell on his sword, and immediately expired, and left a tender orphan friendless and exposed. This is the motive of my writing to you, that you would take the charge of her education, and protect her infant innocence. Be sure to perform this generous office, as you would prosper, and be yourself protected in any of the calamities of human life. By desiring you to make all possible provision for her happiness, I present you with an opportunity of promoting your own.

AMANDA.

L E T T E R VII.

To * * * * *

MY dear Emilia, it will be impossible for me to give you the intelligence I promised from the invisible regions, unless I could translate the language of Paradise into that of mortals: for here are a thousand beauties unrevealed, and a thousand delights unnamed, among the race of men; we drink at the fountain-head of happiness, and bathe in the rivers of immortal pleasure; the sprightly Hours dance along, crowned with love and unutterable ecstasy.

You were witness to my dying agony; I saw your last kind tears, and gave up my breath in your arms. But how changed was the scene in a moment! from the gloom and horror of a death-bed to the smiles and songs of angels, who conducted me to the ethereal heights! a thousand dazzling wonders met my view; the Heavens in pomp unfolded their glories; the Paradise of God opened before me in all its blissful and transporting scenes! the happy Grove stood crowned with unfading verdure; the lucid Currents danced along over sands of gold; the charming Bowers displayed their ever-blooming pride, and breathed ambrosia; the Palaces of the heavenly Powers ascended with exquisite magnificence, sparkling far beyond all the glories of the lower skies, and resounded with the voice of Festivity and Joy.

The first gentle spirit that welcomed me to these happy mansions was your charming brother, gay as the Cherubin; the heavenly Loves and Graces triumphed in all his form, vital Pleasure danced

in his eyes, Life and celestial Bloom sat smiling on his face, a wreath of unfading flowers circled his head, and a golden lute was in his hand, whose harmony, joined to his melting voice, far surpassed all description. That tender innocent passion I had long conceived for him kindled at the first interview, and has taken eternal possession of my soul.

But how shall I make you sensible of what an angel's flowing song, in all the pomp of heavenly harmony, would not fully describe! in what figures of celestial eloquence shall I relate the loves of immortal spirits; or tell you the height, the extent, the fulness, of their bliss! All the soft engagements on earth, the tender sympathies, and the most holy union that Nature knows, are but faint similitudes for the sanctity and grandeur of these divine enjoyments: hope and languishing expectation are no more, and all desire is lost in full and complete fruition: Love reigns in eternal triumph, here it governs every heart, and dwells on every tongue:

They tune their golden harps to the great name
Of Love, immortal Love, their darling theme;
Ten thousand echoes thro' the lightsome plains
Repeat the clear, the sweet, melodious strains:
The fields rejoice, the fragrant groves around
Blossom afresh at their enchanting sound:
The heav'n of heav'ns, from dazzling heights above,
Returns the name, and hails the pow'r, of Love.

But, oh! when the fair face of eternal Love unveils its original glories, and appears in the perfection of uncreated Beauty, how wondrous, how ineffable, the vision! fulness of joy is in his presence, rapture and inexpressible ecstasy: the fairest seraph stops his lute, and, with a graceful

pau
exalt
of im
of ev
Ye
Glori
bold
descri
you a

W
world
compel
the in
suffer t
you su
offer to
seas. C
your wo
sure to
your des
was just
of Peace
not wish
such vir
Heaven.
treated y
has the
his powe
occasion

pause, confesses the subject too great for his most exalted strain. How impetuously do the streams of immortal joy roll in, and enlarge the faculties of every heavenly mind!

Ye sacred Mysteries, unrevealed to men; ye Glories, unprofaned by mortal eyes, forgive the bold attempt that would describe you!—The only description that mortals can receive of you is, that you are not to be described.

DELIA.

L E T T E R VIII.

To * * * * *

WHEN you had just made me happy, and rewarded the most tender passion in the world with the possession of your charms, I was compelled to make a voyage to Spain: you saw the inward struggle of my soul, and that I must suffer the anguish of death in leaving you, when you surprised me with the unexpected generous offer to follow me through all the dangers of the seas. Charmed with the proposal, I took you at your word, and rashly ventured my darling treasure to the hazards of a voyage. I lost my life in your defence against an Algerine Corsair; the cause was just, and met with its approbation in the seats of Peace and Happiness; for my own lot, I could not wish it more advantageous; and for your's, such virtue in distress will be the peculiar care of Heaven. The Barbarian, that made you his prize, treated you with an unaccustomed gentleness; nor has the illustrious Bassa, that ransomed you out of his power at an immense price, given you the least occasion of reproach: in the height of his passion

he has always observed even the sanctity of the Christian rules, and treated you with a submission very different from the principles and customs of his country. Though he has courted you to increase the number of his wives, he seems to have such an absolute command of himself, even in the warmth of his youthful desires, that you need fear no violence from the generous Infidel: but should the worst you imagine arrive, Heaven has a thousand ways to protect your innocence: depend on that, and let not the extravagance of your grief persuade you that it is lawful to free yourself by the fatal opiate which you keep for that design. The heavenly Genii that attend you have made a thousand impressions on your sleeping fancy to warn you from the desperate attempt: sometimes you have been led through the desolate shades where unhappy ghosts complain; the gloomy caverns, the abodes of eternal Horror, have been opened to your view: sometimes the rewards of Patience and constant Virtue have displayed their glories to your pleased imagination; and, by the soft inspiring whispers of celestial beings, your restless thoughts have been composed, while the realms of Joy have unfolded their delights in visionary prospects to you: by heavenly scenes and gentle slumbers your griefs were calmed, the tempest of your passions suspended: then quietly attend the event, and the gentle Calicara will find a way to free you. Till Abubecar saw you, she was his darling slave, and as he is handsome to admiration, she loved, and renounced the Christian faith for him; but still the fair apostate in her heart adores the name which her tongue has denied. This, though you are her rival, fills her soul with the softest compassion for you, and makes her abhor the task that her insolent master has im-

posed
the h
glory
counse
persua
gloriou
the res
ured
plying
five an
Your
her wit
recover
an abse
ecure o
your fr
cumstan
no one.
In the
perate t
however
py for m
in the de
own life
age to m
regret th
called a
attendant
panion in
you so fre
I should v
as I often
the consta
rain thou
to the will
I am in th
own life is

posed, of persuading you to quit the possession of the heavenly truth, which is your happiness and glory : she is so far from giving you that infernal counsel, that she has, with tears and intreaties, persuaded you to die rather than abandon your glorious hopes and title to immortality; nor will she rest till she has, by some means or other, secured you from Abubecar's importunity, of complying with which she has experienced the delusive and bitter consequence.

Your coldness and aversion, with the ascendant her wit and vivacity has on his temper, will soon recover the youthful wanderer, and restore her to an absolute empire over him; and then you are secure of a guiltless protection till you can give your friends in England intelligence of your circumstances, who will soon pay your ransom, which no one can for virtue lost.

In the mean time, if you love my memory, moderate the excess of your grief for my death, which, however tragical it appeared, was glorious and happy for me. I fell in the ardour of a brave action, in the defence of your beauty and liberty, and my own life; the wounds I received gave a free passage to my soul, which took its flight with no other regret than that of parting with you, if it may be called a separation; for I have been your constant attendant in my invisible state, your unseen companion in the beautiful walks and bowers, where you so frequently spend your hours of retirement. I should with pleasure hear you repeat my name, as I often do, and in the softest language express the constancy of a virtuous passion, could you restrain those floods of tears, and be more resigned to the will of Heaven; but let this assure you that I am in the height of happiness, and when your own life is finished, we shall meet to part no more;

which circumstance, though you, through your partiality for me, may too highly value, believe me, you will find it by much the smallest blessing of this place.

AMINTOR.

LETTER IX.

To SYLVIA.

FROM the fragrant bowers, the ever-blooming fields, and lightsome regions of the Morning Star, I wish health and every blessing to the charming Sylvia, the blessing of the earth!

I have a secret to reveal to you of the greatest importance to your present and future happiness. You are as much a stranger to your own rank and circumstances as I was to mine till I came here, where I met a fair spirit, who informed me, that when she was a mortal I was her son, and not the heir of the Earl of —, as was supposed; and that the Lord — is your own brother. It is necessary that you should know and discover this to him, which will prevent that innocent fondness which he now indulges for you from growing into a guilty passion.

You have been educated only as a dependant on the noble family you are in, and as a companion to the young ladies, who are really your sisters. The mystery is this: My Lord, your father, had several daughters successively by the Countess, your mother, but no lawful heir, which made him fond of a natural son that he had by a mistress: his affection for him was so extravagant, that he contrived to settle his estate on him: this gave your mother such anxiety, that her jealousy and

aversion
when sh
ved a d
out of h
confide,
their tin
mother
the affai
was excl
the Coun
mother,
a year th
ing as fo
undiscove
I lived
old, when
bloom; h
notions o
prejudices
ing end, v
with a gol
misery, al
imperfect,
closing my
mortal life
like a dres
what. Son
pendence o
mination t
threw off i
live and re
tional bein
the insignif
mory of my
and toys th
would have
been singula

aversion to the youth put her on this rash design, when she was with child, to exchange it, if it proved a daughter. My mother, who was married out of her service, and in whom she could entirely confide, was with child of me at the same time: their time of delivery was very near together; my mother had a son, and you proved a daughter: the affair was managed with such dexterity, that I was exchanged, and passed without suspicion for the Countess's son, and you was received by my mother, and supposed to be her daughter. Within a year the Countess had really a son; but she dying as soon as she was delivered, the secret was undiscovered.

I lived a guiltless impostor till I was ten years old, when a sudden decay withered my tender bloom; but as I had been bred in the strictest notions of piety and truth, without any childish prejudices, or slavish fears, I expected my approaching end, whilst Death made his advances armed with a golden-headed dart. I had no notions of misery, all my expectations were bright, though imperfect, of some Paradise beyond the grave; and closing my eyes, I fell asleep, and waked to immortal life and happiness. All that was past looked like a dream, like an airy image of I know not what. Some notion I had of a God, and my dependence on him; but how different from the illumination that broke in on my soul the moment it threw off its mortal veil! it was then I began to live and reflect: it was then I found myself a rational being, and looked back with contempt on the insignificant part I had been acting: the memory of my original follies, the childish baubles and toys that had just before been my diversion, would have given me some confusion, if my case had been singular; but I met thousands of gay spirits

newly released, who had performed their short task, and finished their trifling farces of life; at the same time transported at their present superior circumstances, they made the most agreeable reflections on their past state. What grandeur, what vivacity, what enlargement of their intellectual powers! how sparkling, how resembling the angels of God, their forms! while a perfect consciousness, and exact remembrance, of what they were but a few moments past, raised their joy and gratitude to the height, and recommended heaven itself.

There was one circumstance in my early death that makes me look on it as a peculiar favour, in that I was removed by the just dispensation of Heaven from the possession of what is, in the strictest equity, your brother's right: this reflection, from a principle of justice and truth, gave me an ineffable satisfaction; since, if I had lived, I had been the unhappy, though innocent, usurper of a rank and inheritance to which I had not the least real title. This, with a thousand other advantages, makes me bless the period that freed me from mortality; that happy moment that delivered me from ignorance and vanity; from the errors, the guilt, the miseries, of human life; of which, though I had but little experience, I am now fully informed of the state of my fellow-creatures, and with what toil and hazard a longer course of years had been attended.

I remember no engagement to the world but my affection for you; nor has Death effaced the tender impression; but what was then a natural sympathy is now a rational esteem. I view with pleasure your growing virtue, and frequent my native world for your sake. There was something perfectly engaging in the guiltless sorrow you ex-

pressed
closed
less cla
flumber
of a ro
visits t
have te
it woul
me. T
with ple
gentle p
soul, th
gains ne
benefice
solicitud
a tempta
have don
ture, an
ther, but
a step far
in and d
give you
ing desir
the encha
no certain
contagious
they appea
sation, an
both, ende
is only no
as a more
your innoc
an opportu
of your da
dead four
have often
with delig

pressed in my sickness; and when my eyes were closed in death you would have watched the breathless clay, in hopes to wake me from the fatal slumbers again; nor could the gloomy solemnity of a room of state deter you from paying your visits to the silent reliques. If any thing could have tempted me to wish myself a mortal again, it would have been the tender tears you shed for me. The only intervals of human life I review with pleasure are the hours I spent with you; this gentle passion was the stamp of Heaven on my soul, the first soft impression it received, and it gains new energy in these happy regions of pure beneficence and love. This gives me a constant solicitude, while I see you on the borders of such a temptation; you are yet perfectly guiltless, and have done nothing unbecoming the sanctity of Nature, and the chaste affection of a sister for a brother, but you are on the very limits of danger; a step farther, the least advance, involves you in sin and destruction. I know this discovery will give you a secret horror, and quench every kindling desire: the purity of your virtue will start at the enchanting error that might have led you on to certain perdition; for young as you are, the contagious spark is ready to kindle, and the lovely boy appears more alluring: your mutual conversation, and the early dawning of superior merit in both, endeared you to each other by such sentiments as only noble and virtuous minds experience: but as a more late discovery might have been fatal to your innocence and peace, I impatiently attended an opportunity and method to make you sensible of your danger. I know, though I have been dead four years, you still remember me, and I have often heard you name me, and seen you with delight gazing on my picture; this made

me resolve to appear to you when I saw you. The first opportunity that pleased me you were sitting gazing at your own reflection, and sticking flowers in your hair to adorn it for your young lover: I knew you had read of Fairies, and looked at painted Cupids with delight; in such a poetical form I thought you would have heard my story, and been pleased with my figure;

While youthful Splendour lighten'd in my eyes,
Clear as the smiling glory of the skies,
Sprinkled with radiant gold; a purple hue
My wings display'd, my robe celestial blue;
More white than flax my curling tresses flow'd,
My dimpled cheeks with rosy beauty glow'd.

I could not have believed a form more gay than those that glittered on your fan could have discomposed you; but, to my surprise, I saw you faint away before I had begun to speak to you: you soon recovered from the swoon, and returning to the house, told a story, which you found no body believed; so wise is the age in which you live as not to be imposed on! You easily persuaded yourself it was no more than a dream: however, I durst attempt your courage no more, but give you this important information this way; which, if you should not credit you are undone. In this admonition your guardian angel joins with

ALEXIS.

LETTER X.

TO LEONORA.

YOUR story of seeing an apparition in the garden I perceive has frighted your whole family, and not a mortal durst venture into the

hau
but y
tentio
charm
tered
fence
unreal
As I
take y
set wh
led to
sylvan
and, as
and as
immort
pleased
might c
your co
me you
ed in fu
make yo
least offe
flight wi
you foun
not intru
a sober a
convince
soon as y
material
of the ce
fible, I ha
brother, v
spleen and
my death
you told h
he had be
You mig

haunted walk, as they call it, after the sun sets but your brother, to whom I have not the least intention to show myself: it was only to you, my charming Leonora, the visit was designed; I flattered myself your good sense, and uncommon presence of mind, would have guarded you from those unreasonable fears.

As I expected, the fine evening induced you to take your accustomed walk. The sun was hardly set when you entered a long avenue of trees that led to a green flowery arch, which looked on a sylvan palace; here I seated myself in a human, and, as I thought, a very agreeable, figure and dress; and as much as possible disguising the splendour of immortality, I imitated my mortal form; and so pleased myself, that by seeing me at a distance you might come nearer without surprise, or retire, if your courage failed. As soon as you perceived me you stopped, in some consternation, and seemed in suspense whether you should go nearer or make your retreat: I durst not rise, nor make the least offer to follow, for fear you should take your flight with too much speed and disorder; and as you found I was a very civil apparition, and would not intrude on your retirement, you went off with a sober and decent pace, often looking back to convince yourself that what you saw was real. As soon as you had reached the house I shifted my material figure for one more becoming the dignity of the celestial condition; and being again invisible, I heard the fantastic relation you gave your brother, who told you it was all the effect of the spleen and obstinate grief you had indulged since my death: you still asserted the reality of what you told him, but he believed it no more than if he had heard it from the pulpit.

You might have dismissed every thought of fear;

I would not have injured you when I was a mortal liable to folly and error, much less in a state of perfection and happiness : there is not a spark of guilt or malignity left in virtuous minds when released from their earthly prison; all is gentle and kind, and their concern for human welfare is infinitely more tender and disinterested than before.

The terror with which men fly us would have something in it incredible, if we did not remember our own original folly and ignorance; but as we do, your strange apprehensions only divert and entertain us. If you thought justly, you would have more reason to run full speed from one another than from us, who have neither permission nor inclination to injure, but are ready to screen you in a thousand dangers, and to promote your interest with the most generous concern, while you are entirely ignorant of your benefactors. Were human organs more refined, and your perceptions heightened to a greater delicacy, you would see a thousand ethereal forms in the full bloom of immortal beauty and undecaying life, not fashioned to give you terror, but love and delight.

You see, my dear Leonora, I would fain cure your prejudices, and reconcile you to the society of spirits, that you may sometimes permit me to warn your unguarded years when dangers and snares attend you.

You know your father left me the guardian of your fortune and beauty, so favourable was his opinion of me; this circumstance made me miserable, and at once cut off all my future views of happiness. I had indulged a secret passion for you, and flattered myself you had the same for me; but as my birth and fortune were much inferior to yours, I was resolved rather to die than use the advantage that was in my power, or violate the

sacre
soft
but t
into a
high
of be
unbec
was u
selfish
in my
of act
truth.
you to
with a
the co
my he
which
delity
and let
my tru
centiou
dangers
have in
have di
tue by
fears pu
you ag
how un
is. Oh,
yourself

sacred trust I had undertaken. By a thousand little soft inadvertencies you discovered your passion; but though secure of success, I durst not seduce you into a compliance of marriage so vastly below your high rank and character, nor take the advantage of betraying your thoughtless years to an action unbecoming your quality and fortune: my soul was unstained with any design that was mean and selfish, and the entire confidence your father had in my integrity and conduct fixed my resolution of acting up to the severest rules of virtue and truth. But to what distress was I reduced! I loved you to madness, while I never approached you but with a dissembled indifference: this restraint, and the constant agitation of my thoughts, disordered my health, and threw me into a violent fever, which soon finished my life. The justice and fidelity of my conduct found its immense reward, and left me nothing to repent of but the giving my trust entirely to your brother's care, whose licentious manners will expose you to a thousand dangers. To repair this negligence, I would fain have induced you to a conversation that might have directed your conduct, and fortified your virtue by my friendly admonition; but since your fears put it out of my power ever to be visible to you again, I must take this way to convince you how unchangeable my concern for your happiness is. Oh, let it not be dearer to me than it is to yourself!

CLERIMONT.

LETTER XI.

To the same.

I LEAVE your fellow-mortals to congratulate your recovery, but I must own it was a disappointment to me. You were on the confines of immortality; the angels, who are ministering spirits to the heirs of salvation, had prepared their song of triumph to receive you: I had wreathed a garland of the fairest flowers that bloomed in the Paradise of God to crown such early and distinguished virtue; with impatience I numbered your moments, and expected every one would be your last. The sparkling vivacity of your eyes expired, the roses on your cheeks vanished into a mortal paleness, and the springs of life seemed just ready to cease their motion; when He, who governs Nature with a supreme command, restored you back to health. Your recovery was surprising even to angels, who, though ignorant of the limits the sovereign Disposer has set to human life, yet often make exact conjectures of the course of second causes, and the period of mortal lives. You are certainly given back as a blessing to the world; your example may yet make a thousand profelytes to Virtue; but, for my part, nothing but the will of Heaven could reconcile me to this dispensation. When you was just in the harbour, to be tossed back again on the tempestuous ocean; when you had welcomed Death as your kind deliverer, ready to free you from Cassander's importunity, and your brother's tyranny, who will do his utmost to compel you to this detestable marriage: but your constancy to refuse it is of the highest importance to your present and future

happi
ed nar
he stol
two m
left an
of her
where
prolita
but by
the app

This
been in
cover it
the vio
force y
Misery.

It is a
me give
heavenly
and shou
the mos
would w
emulation
unknown

You m
tice, prov
be the gr
to mine.

YOUR
nigh

happiness. He is already married, under a borrowed name, to a young and beautiful Italian whom he stole from her parents; and after he had lived two months concealed with her, the perjured man left and abandoned her to misery: in the height of her anguish she put herself into a nunnery, where she wastes her days in a reluctant and unprofitable devotion; for true Religion cannot exist but by our choice; Necessity can give nothing but the appearance of it.

This is a secret of which you would never have been informed by any human means: if you discover it to your brother, it will deliver you from the violence which he is determined to use to force you to wed Cassander, another name for Misery.

It is a disinterested concern for you that makes me give you this advice: there is no jealousy in heavenly minds, they know their pre-eminence; and should they appear in their celestial splendour, the most perfect beauty of the children of men would wither in their presence: but vanity and emulation are no more, and all selfish designs are unknown in these happy Continents.

You may, by making a proper use of this notice, provide for your own happiness; but, blessed be the great Author of all good! you cannot add to mine.

CLERIMONT.

L E T T E R X I I .

To my dear Brother.

YOUR friend, the unhappy Carlos, died this night at Naples. I was willing to surprise

you with this intelligence in a way which no human speed can reach.

I wish my endeavours for your reformation may have more success now than they had when I was in a state of mortality: I am persuaded, if you had seen the exit of the wretched youth who had been the companion of your riots, it would have convinced you of the falsehood of his principles, and how little support the thoughts of falling back into his original nothing gave him when the gloomy hour approached, in which he was to lose the sight of the sun and stars, with all the visible beauties of Nature, for ever.

To be insensible! to be no more! to find his eyes closing in an eternal sleep! gave him insupportable horrors. But if this was the worst that he apprehended, never did mortal give up his life in a manner more cowardly and inconsistent. He durst not bear darkness or solitude one moment; he started at a shadow, and showed a more than childish fear and weakness in his actions; he even begged his physicians to flatter him with the hopes of life, and not let him know if they thought his case desperate: he charged his attendant not to mention death or the grave, nor to speak a serious word, in his hearing. Though his affairs were in the utmost disorder, no person durst venture to advise him to settle them by a will. But all these cautions gave him no relief; the anguish, the guilt, the confusion, of his mind, was visible in his looks. The abandoned Amoret, who had followed him in the disguise of a page, was seldom permitted to see him: and whenever she approached him he trembled and fell into the greatest agonies, closed his eyes, or turned them from her; but spoke nothing to support her in the distress he had brought on her, nor expressed the least re-

morfe.
Sebasti
vows,
preevish
even de
dicines
reproach
of skill
sistance
art. Hi
amazem
slow and
and pai
queror,
and wer

I hope
have the
recollect
breath;
had emp
My de
now in
gancies:
your hap
the ackn
tals sign
dignities,
sures; b
necient
would sa
pines: t
amity, w
dawning
mates acc
splendour
I have r
let me rec

more for having seduced her to leave the noble Sebastian, to whom she was engaged by marriage vows, and a thousand tender obligations. His peevishness and impatience were unlotherable, and even despicable to his own servants. When the medicines he took had not their expected success, he reproached his physicians with negligence, or want of skill; and yet, by intervals, implored their assistance, as if his being itself depended on their art. His senses were perfect to the last gasp: with amazement he saw the universal Terror make its slow and dreadful approaches; and after a tedious and painful struggle yielded to the gloomy Conqueror, and with a deep groan gave up his breath, and went to make the great experiment.

I hope this account of your friend's death will have the happy effect I designed it, and make you recollect the counsel I gave you with my dying breath;—the best legacy I could bequeath, if I had had empires to dispose of.

My dear Brother, I can have no selfish motives now in endeavouring to reclaim your extravagancies: in this superior state my concern for your happiness must be all abstract and generous: the acknowledgments of indigent miserable mortals signify nothing to spirits exalted to celestial dignities, in the full enjoyment of immortal pleasures; but this gives them the most kind and beneficent dispositions to erring men, whom they would fain allure into the paths that lead to happiness: those glimmering sparks of goodness and amity, which, in your cold regions, are but just dawning in virtuous minds, in these warmer climates acquire new ardour, and burn with eternal splendour.

I have more zeal than ever for your interest; and let me recall, but not reproach you with, the ob-

ligations you have to pay some regard to my advice. You know, when we lost the best of parents, that he left his whole estate to my disposal, with such a moderate fortune to your share as must have restrained your wild expenses; but when I found you had some sense of your folly, in hopes to reform you by generous treatment, I immediately settled on you half the vast fortune that was in my power. I will not urge my venturing my life in your defence when assaulted in our travels; for this was but an action of humanity which every brave man owes to a perfect stranger; but I must insist on the merit of resigning my pretensions to the lovely Bellamira for you. She was all the joy, the hope, I had on earth; I loved her as I loved Virtue and Happiness; and yet, when you discovered to me the anguish and disorder of your mind, and your violent passion for her, I made a retreat, and left the weeping beauty to reproach me with a levity and indifference to which my heart was a stranger; disguised my tender inclination, and pleaded yours with such success, that she yielded to your request, and gave her matchless charms and immense fortune to your possession.

But this advantageous match had not the effect I hoped, nor was the least restraint to your licentious manner of life. You acted a shameful part in assisting Carlos in his affair with Amoret, and a more shameful one in promising to protect and support her if he abandoned her, when you knew what repeated favours you had received from the injured and generous Sebastian. Your treacherous and ungrateful treatment of a man of his exalted merit fills me with the greatest remorse and confusion; a thousand and a thousand times have I reproached myself for having been

the unh
pined b
in its pr
have fee
The ne
treated t
rits, dan
gayest fe
flow app
was to b
all engag
moret: t
lemnity;
the just e
your snar
fear be y
take this
"house is
"down to
riously, th
double your

To * *

HOWE
existe
tion to the
and act in
life, so the b
to a more n
for your hap
ed than eve
bers, waitc

the unhappy instrument of Belamira's ruin, who pined beneath her grief, like a fair flower blasted in its prime : I never met her eyes but she might have seen the remorse and confusion of my soul. The negligence and contempt with which you treated the best of women sunk my youthful spirits, damped my noblest designs, and clouded the gayest season of my life. While Death made its slow approaches, the last favour I begged of you was to be just to your unhappy wife, in breaking all engagements with the lewd and infamous Amoret : this you promised me with a religious solemnity ; but I know her present distress (though the just effect and reward of her crimes) will be your snare ; she is all enchantment, and will I fear be your ruin. But if you reject my advice, take this caution from the Royal Penitent : " her house is the way to death, and her gates lead down to hell : " and I desire you to consider seriously, that this admonition must *rescue* from or *double* your guilt.

CLEANDER.

L E T T E R X I I I .

To * * * * *

HOWEVER different my present manner of existence is from my former state, my affection to the fair Climene is unchanged. As I live and act in a way inexpressibly superior to mortal life, so the beneficent dispositions of my nature rise to a more noble and generous height. My concern for your happiness is more tender and disinterested than ever : I have guarded your nightly slumbers, waited on your solitary walks, and follow-

ed you like your attendant angel, who, pleased with my officious care, has often left you to my charge. Your present danger gives me as much anxiety as consists with a state of happiness: I could not refrain from giving you this warning, which to your surprise you will find on your toilette, among trifles the most its reverse.

You are, O too credulous fair! on the very brink of ruin; treachery and delusion are in Alcander's eyes and tongue, and if you keep this night's appointment with him you are undone. Infamy and perdition are before you; the evil Genii, that envy the happiness of the human race, already insult my pious care; and your celestial guardian seems half resolved to quit his trust; the tender grief hangs on his beautiful face like a cloud on a rosy morning; and in the deepest silence of the night, when the creation seemed lulled in an universal slumber, in the gloom of a neighbouring grove that you often frequent, I heard him tune his silver lute to strains soft and languishing as those in which the heavenly ministers mourned the loss of Paradise, and the bold transgression of the first woman that fell. And your's, unhappy maid! will be a fall from the heights of Honour, from the very triumph of Virtue. What can man believe! what can the sex boast, when such innocence, such truth, such modesty, as your's, are perverted? Vice will insult, to find Climene among her votaries, and hardly believe her own conquest; surprised like the barbarous Gauls in the Roman senate, who thought it an assembly of gods, till they saw them bleed.

With what a profligate air, with what insolent vanity, did your young seducer leave you last night! how proud of his unexpected success, when he had gained your consent to the guilty assigna-

tion!
remorse
disorder
you ap
a Bible
but dur
rules sh
thought
yourself
had ma
on the p
accounts
tants of
the effe
temper
ance and
ter migh
you.

You ha
and sure
putation,
your min
hides the i
Alcander
now pines
hood and
be kind to

After th
crime will
venture or
sign and
give up y
worlds of
and youth
you are at

tion! I stayed with you an unseen witness of the remorse and confusion in which he left you: how disordered! how uneasy! how unlike yourself did you appear! It was your usual hour of devotion; a Bible lay near, which you took in your hand, but durst not open, for fear the sanctity of its rules should reproach you: the distraction of your thoughts gave me hopes that you would recover yourself, and break the guilty engagement you had made. To confirm your doubtful virtue, I was on the point of making myself visible; but the unaccountable fear that mortals have of the inhabitants of the immaterial worlds restrained me, lest the effect should have been fatal to your timorous temper; however gentle and propitious my appearance and address had been: and I thought this letter might less surprise, and more calmly persuade, you.

You have yet a few hours to recollect yourself; and sure you will not give up an unblemished reputation, with all the peace and innocence of your mind, to this blind extravagant passion! besides the injustice to the unhappy Sylvia, to whom Alcander is engaged by a thousand vows, and who now pines away in obscurity, a victim to his falsehood and perjury. Be virtuous and compassionate; be kind to her, and just to yourself.

After this warning, even from the Dead, your crime will be aggravated: you must deliberately venture on perdition, and damn yourself with design and sober reflection; you must desperately give up your title to celestial happiness, to the worlds of life and pleasure, of immortal beauty and youth: Oh, how superior to that with which you are at this instant so fatally enamoured below!

LETTER XIV.

To * * * * *

MY dear sister, I have often, since I left the world, had the privilege to supply the place of your guardian Angel: I have been an invisible witness of your tears for my death; and to allay the excess of your grief for me I have been at last permitted to let you know that I am happy.

I can give you no account how my soul was released: I fell asleep in perfect health, with an unusual serenity of mind, and from the gentlest slumbers of innocence and peace awaked in immortal bliss. (How common is sudden death!) I found myself in a moment got above the stars, and outshining the sun in its meridian splendour; corruption had put on incorruption, and mortality was swallowed up of life and immortality: O Death! I cried in the exultation of my thoughts, O Death! where is thy conquest? O King of Terrors! where is thy boasted victory? where is thy sceptre and imperial horrors, thy gloomy state, and dreadful attendants? where are the vast dominions, the cheerless and formless darkness, the shade and the emptiness, the seats of Corruption and Decay? the spell is broken! the enchantment is dissolved! the shadows, the phantoms, the visionary terrors, fly! the celestial morning dawns, and charming scenes arise: but, oh! how boundless, how various, how transporting, the prospect!

Still lost in joy and wonder, tell me, I said, ye Angels, ye smiling Forms that surround me, what easy passage has my spirit found from its mortal prison? what gentle hand has unlocked my earthly

fetter:
finem
was t
come i
called
gions
have
ether,
hills?
a flatter
transpo
terable
mortal
lieve an
You
pine at
ably yo
tinctly f
the wor
ful year
tion, fur
teries of
have bee
trial; it
probation
tory: it
come is c
If you
think as
your dea
persuious
make it fo

fetters, and brought me out of darkness and confinement into immense light and liberty? who was the kind messenger that conveyed the welcome invitation to my ear? what melodious voice called me away from yonder cold tempestuous regions to these soft and peaceful habitations? how have I found my passage through the trackless ether, and gained the summit of the everlasting hills? Am I awake? do I dream? is this a gay, a flattering vision? Oh, no! it is all blissful and transporting certainty! I see, I hear things unutterable, such as never entered into the heart of mortal man to conceive.—Read and believe; believe and be happy.

You see, my dear sister, how blindly you re-pine at the decrees of Heaven, and how unreasonably you lament what you call my early and untimely fate. Could I be happy too soon? I left the world, indeed, in the full pride of my youthful years, in the height of greatness and reputation, surrounded with the blandishments and flatteries of Pleasure: but these advantages might have been fatal snares to my virtue in a longer trial; it was indulgent in Heaven, after a short probation, to crown me with the rewards of victory: it is past the toil, the danger; and all to come is endless peace and triumph.

If you could see as far into futurity now, and think as justly of it as you will certainly do on your deathbed, this letter from me had been superfluous: I only can *design* it beneficial, you may *make* it so.

LETTER XV.

To * * * *

IT is past! the voyage of life is finished! instead of informing you that I am arrived at the Indian coast, this is to let you know that I am safely landed on the Celestial shores; the vessel in which I was embarked, by a tempest, sunk to the bottom of the ocean, and the angel of the waters received my newly-unembodied soul.

I was surprised at the different manner of my existence: I breathed indeed no longer; but I lived, I heard, I saw, with a more exquisite sense than before. But a few moments were past since the raging billows carried Destruction in their appearance; and now I moved unterrified through the deeps, and surveyed the foundation of the ancient hills: the Regent of the waters, pleased with my curiosity, led me through his crystal palaces and coral groves, showed me the pearly grottoes and alcoves of amber, with a thousand wonders, kept secret from the race of men since the basis of the mountains were laid.

As soon as I had gone the round of the liquid regions, an ethereal messenger took me under his conduct: I followed my gentle guide through the airy spaces, and here was all novelty and surprise; I made the tour of the universe, and explored the limits of the creation with unspeakable agility; I moved from star to star, and met ten thousand suns blazing in full glory without fear or consternation; I followed the track of prodigious comets, that drew their flaming tails over half the sky. From the planetary regions I ascended with

the
rior h
but h
uttera
Th
ceive
truly
loved
your a
happy
concer

To

My d

AS
fo
night t
pened t
make a
compani
strength
Lord, y
as you
more cer
you migh
much dis
to a vice
You ha
live; y
hour is d
dom allo

the ease and swiftness of a thought to the superior heaven, the imperial palace of the Most High: but here description fails, and all beyond is unutterable.

This is the only account you can possibly receive of my death, which your own fears had so truly presaged at our parting: and this, my much-loved Henrietta, I hope will put an end to all your anxiety; for, since the change has proved so happy for me, you are too much my friend to be concerned thereat.

PHILANDER.

L E T T E R XVI.

*To my Lord * * * **

My dear Brother,

AS immaterial beings mingle unseen in what society they please, I had the desire last night to know your thoughts of what had happened to you the night before, and I heard you make a very gay declamation to some of your free companions on the power of fancy, and the strength of your own imagination: but really, my Lord, you are not so visionary and extravagant as you represented yourself: there is nothing more certain than what you saw and heard; and you might have credited your senses without so much diffidence and modesty, which you turn into a vice.

You have but a few weeks, my dear Brother, to live; your sands are numbered, and your last hour is determined. I obtained a permission, seldom allowed, to give you some warning of your

approaching fate : I chose the opportunity, when I found you, in a clear moon-light night, sitting in a pensive posture, by the side of a fountain, in your garden. To gain credit to my message I stood before you in the splendour of a heavenly form, and the bloom of immortal beauty ; but so resembling my former self, that, in your surprise, you called me sister, and stepped forward to embrace me. I durst not profane myself by a mortal touch ; but, eluding your arms, placed myself before you on the opposite side of the canal. I stood silent some time, that you might be recollected ; and then setting a golden lute, which I had in my hand, to one of the melodious strains which angels sing to expiring saints, when they would soften the agonies of death, and make its terrors smile ; in those languishing and melting notes I gave you an invitation to the starry mansions, believing this would have a much better effect than any thing terrible to one of your undaunted temper : I delivered my message, and in an instant disappeared.

I have repeated these circumstances to you, as a proof that all was real, and neither a dream, nor a waking *reverie*, as you have persuaded yourself. But, since no mortal knows this but yourself, and you concealed the greatest part of this relation from your gay friends, when you was so eloquent on the wonders of imagination, I hope this will find its wished success, and put you on the most exact preparation to meet, with a Christian fortitude, the greatest terror that mortal man can encounter. Though your life has been unstained with any base or unjust action, there are some levities in your conversation that require your speedy penitence and reformation ; or seeming trifles will enlarge themselves into the greatest errors.

It
thou
you f
ful, c
ter, a
gloom
hood,
errors
oh! h
able r
me fo
was c
his te
that n
back.

You
larity
are ne
and m
aspect.

Take
happy
tween
pressibl

To PHIL

IT wa
made
Christian
tality it
ness of n
of felicity

It is a serious thing, my Lord, to die; you thought so when, with the most tender concern, you saw me, shivering and pale, anxious and fearful, on the very borders of death, doubtful to enter, and terrified at the darkness that hung on the gloomy valley; when even the follies of my childhood, which was hardly past, and the slightest errors of my youth, sat heavy on my soul. And, oh! how unwillingly did my soul quit its agreeable mansion! how many soft engagements made me fond of life! the charming youth, to whom I was contracted by my parents, detained me with his tears: had angels beckoned me to the skies, that melting language would have tempted me back.

You little think, my dear Brother, what regularity of the passions, what sanctity of manners, are necessary to take off the horrors of Death, and make that gloomy Monarch wear a smiling aspect.

Take this friendly admonition, and be for ever happy; then will that relation which is now between us still subsist, and I shall be, in joys inexpressible, your sister to all eternity.

SERENA,

L E T T E R XVII.

To PHILOCLES, from IBRAHIM, a Turkish Bessa.

IT was you, my dear Philocles, that Heaven made the instrument of my conversion to Christianity: but while I was in a state of mortality it was impossible for me to know the greatness of my obligations to you, and to what height of felicity your friendly instructions directed me;

how low, how disproportioned, were my expectations to the grandeur of my present happiness! how superior is it even to those noble ideas your description gave me of celestial joys! As you converted me to, let me establish you in, the only true religion.

What reason have I to bless the moment that began our acquaintance, and the event that placed your character to my view in such an agreeable light! there was, indeed, something in your whole conduct so artless, so sincere, so conformable to the strictest rules of truth and justice, that I at once quitted my prejudices to the faith you avowed: the Christian (which is not always the case) recommended Christianity.

The negotiations I had with you, when you were Consul for the States of Holland at Smyrna, gave me numerous instances of your honest and generous disposition; but nothing surprised me more than seeing you venture your life, in a dreadful storm, to save a Portuguese, your mortal enemy, whose vessel was just overset, and himself ready to sink amidst the threatening waves, which he till then imagined less his foe than yourself. I was witness to the godlike action, and immediately concluded that there must be something divine in a religion that could raise human nature to such an height of beneficence: it was all resistless conviction, my soul confessed its force, while I considered with what a becoming modesty you received the acknowledgments of your adversary, as calmly as for some trifling favour you would have accepted the thanks of your sincerest friend. You seemed conscious of having done nothing extraordinary, nothing but what was suitable to the constant disposition of your mind, if Heaven had favoured you with more frequent oc-

cafon
have

It
zard
ments
quifiti
which
of con
tion, c
self to
and im
Your c
ced me
spire y
foul a c
vanqu
Christi
leaving
where
braced,

It wa
I found
ease my
pressed
lost: ho
ance tha
any per
your's.

I pur
and onl
my pow
to gain
belief fir
nishment
clination
to perva
As abfur

casions of performing such heroic actions. You have a sense to make what is heroic *common*.

It was a charity truly divine that made you hazard your life, and expose it to the worst of torments, to rescue me from error. I was more inquisitive than the laws of the Alcoran allowed, which induced me to seek so many opportunities of conversing with you. Without the least caution, or regard to your own safety, you left yourself to the mercy of an Infidel, satisfied my scruples, and importuned me to quit the Mahometan faith. Your conduct was all demonstration; and convinced me that nothing but heavenly Truth could inspire you with such fortitude, and kindle in your soul a charity so perfectly disinterested. I was soon vanquished, and became a joyful proselyte to the Christian principles; nor found the least regret in leaving my native soil to follow you to the Hague, where I might openly profess the faith I had embraced, and be in the right with impunity.

It was not long before a fever seized me: when I found the symptoms mortal I sent for you to ease my burthened soul of the only care that oppressed it; but before you came my speech was lost: however, the discovery was of such importance that it still engages my concern; nor is there any person whose fidelity I can depend on like your's.

I purchased a beautiful Grecian slave, the first and only object of my love: though she was in my power, I only attempted by gentle methods to gain her affections, but in vain; her Christian belief still set the view of future rewards and punishments before her, and checked her softest inclinations: to conquer her virtue I was induced to pervert her to the doctrines of the Alcoran. As absurdly as I reasoned, she was soon convin-

ced that her soul was as perishing as her body, and that there was no prospect of immortality for any of her sex; that present joys were all she could expect; and, in losing youth and love she lost the highest end of her creation. Too soon the fair Apostate believed my detested doctrines, and took the poison from my tongue. renounced the great Messiah, and embraced the idle dreams of an impostor; gave up her claim to immortality, and yielded herself to my licentious wishes. Thus, free from the restraints of religion, the fair Libertine grew dissolute and profane beyond the limits of her sex: her sportive wit and boundless vanity now ridiculed all that she once thought sacred: there was something so wild, so unnatural, in her impiety, that I half repented my success; but never was truly sensible of the injury I had done her till I was convinced of the truth of Christianity. It is this unspeakable damage that I hope you will find some method to repair: it will not be impossible, by some of your friends, to find access to her; she is now at my brother's disposal; her ransom will be easy, and a charity worthy your character. Your *charity* will redeem her person, your *example* her mind, from a more deplorable slavery.

IBRAHIM.

LETTER XVIII.

To a son, from his deceased father.

IF there is the least spark of filial gratitude in your breast; if there is any deference due to the memory of a once indulgent father, I charge you to recall the challenge you have sent.—What

Shall
gene
nitio
unde
the v
reput
and a
falsel
If
you b
ciety
from
tals;
on a
of Da
ject o
of you
gallan
how
The
ty; De
rious
you ha
enchan
testing
induce
But
lady, i
braver
ving up
to main
perjure
divine
to infar
turn hi
tion to
complai

shall I say?—not to your adversary, but to your generous, your well-meaning friend: his admonitions were just, and the relation he gave you undoubted fact. You know, in your conscience, the woman you vindicate has neither virtue nor reputation to defend, while you are daring death, and all the horrors that ensue, to justify a known falsehood, and purchase *forme* with *heaven*.

If you are killed in this mad duel, the moment you breathe your last you will mingle with a society that make very different judgments of things from what pass for maxims of honour among mortals; you will appear with a very ill grace, and on a most impertinent occasion, among the spirits of Darkness, to whom you will be an eternal object of derision. The boasted beauty and charms of your mistress will be but a poor excuse for your gallantry, though you should tell them in heroics how “the world has been lost for a woman.”

These extravagancies will vanish with mortality; Death will draw the veil, and place more serious scenes in view: you will find how cheaply you have sold immortal glory, and curse the fond enchantment that led you on to destruction; detesting that most, the love of which is now your inducement to ruin.

But ask yourself, What is the virtue of this fine lady, in defence of whom you are going with such bravery to die? What is this honour you are giving up your life and all your hopes of salvation to maintain? This guiltless lovely woman is only perjured to her marriage vows; this angel, this divine creature, does but deceive, does but expose to infamy, the best of husbands; she does but return his unequalled tenderness and constant affection to her with artful fondness, and dissembled complaisance: she is but insensible to the merit

of a man who is his country's ornament and pride; a person of the most graceful appearance, by Nature formed to please the nicest of the fair sex; liberal and magnificent, obliging and sincere above all disguise; and who, from his own conscious honour, entirely confides in this artful woman, whom he raised from distress and obscurity. Charmed with her beauty and dissembled affection for him, he has indulged all her wild ambition, gratified her boundless vanity, and set no more limits to her expenses than you now to your folly.

This is the unhappy man who would expose to the jest of every senseless rake, by a public quarrel for the reputation of his wife. What enmity could be so cruel as this *defence*!

And this is the dear innocent charmer, whose virtue you would justify, even by damning yourself, and murdering the generous Lindamor, your best, your experienced, friend, whose sincerity has been his only crime: be not so shamefully valiant. With what confusion must you draw your sword on a man to whom you have such a series of obligations? How often has he supplied the necessities to which your extravagant gaming has reduced you, and discharged your debts of honour, as you call them? and what was his offence now, but setting the character of an infamous woman in its true light, with a kind intention to reclaim you from your dotage?

What a fatal influence has this dissolute passion had on your mind! how profligate your manners! how unlike to the first part of your life, when a noble inclination governed your soul, and the lovely Erminia was all your joy! Oh! may her youthful charms recover you, and animate your mind to glorious actions! your King, your country, the

Prote
man n
better
nate y
the cou
him.

To

YOU

fr
this ma
the inju
tions to

You c
the guil
conduct
vagrant
you to
have ab
lity; yo
ing disg
science,
ly room
loose en
gardens
famous c
been wit
treats; a
and set r
which su
But un
nity and
Volume

Protestant cause, the rights and liberties of human nature, now require your courage, and find better employment for your sword than to assassinate your friends. If you are truly brave, have the *courage* to submit; the only way to conquer him.

EUSEBIUS.

L E T T E R X I X .

*To my Lord * * * *, from his deceased wife.*

YOUR present confinement, by a slow recovery from a dangerous sickness, makes me hope this may prove a time to prevail with you to pity the injured Sylviana, and be just to your obligations to her.

You once loved me, my Lord; and while I lived, the guiltless passion had an effect on your whole conduct: but your grief for me gave a very extravagant turn to your mind, and instead of leading you to a superior, a reasonable, happiness, you have abandoned yourself to the heights of sensuality; you have pursued Pleasure in every tempting disguise; refined on vice, and turned it into a science, and are too truly learned in it. Your stately rooms have sounded with nightly revels and loose enchanting songs; your groves and fragrant gardens have been devoted to luxury and infamous delights; the shades and fountains have been witnesses to scenes unbecoming their chaste retreats; and have found out new ways to perdition, and set no limits to your dissolute inclinations, which survive *satiety* itself.

But under this gay disguise, this triumph of vanity and madness, you have not known an inter-

val of happiness that has been sincere; you could not conquer your own good sense, nor wholly forget the restraints of a noble education. I have been witness to your secret remorse, your penitent soliloquies: I have seen you recollect yourself, assume your native greatness, heard you with the most moving eloquence lament your folly, and assent to all the rules of temperance and virtue; assent to and violate the same hour.

You have relapsed to your usual extravagance, till this dangerous sickness set the terrors of death in your view: it was then you confessed your injustice to the charming Sylviana: it hung on your soul, and appeared with a thousand aggravations; nor will you ever know peace till you have confirmed your vows, and the absolute obligations you are under to marry her. Obligations to be happy, methinks, should be easily complied with.

How happy was the lovely maid in her humble circumstances! how blessed in her spotless innocence! till Chance (in your rural excursions) led you, in a luckless hour, to the verdant shade, where you found her retired to screen herself from the mid-day sun, unmolested with the cares of love or ambition.

The natural elegance, the modesty, and easiness of her behaviour, fired your thoughts, and partly by violence, and partly by the most solemn vows of marriage, you ruined her.

But what unaffected sorrow, what remorse, that fatal moment cost her you have often witnessed; with what graceful pride has she since refused the least favour, and been inflexible to your soft persuasions on any terms but the marriage you promised her? How moving have her tears been! how just her complaints! What a pomp of virtue, what a conscious greatness, has appeared in her aspect,

when, by your artful addressess, you have again endeavoured to seduce her' Nor presents, nor equipage, nor the most profuse settlement you have offered her, has tempted her to act in any character but what Virtue might own in the view of heaven and the world. Her very crime with you should have the force of virtue in it.

Your quality, my Lord, does not absolve you from the divine laws, nor give a sanction to perjury, but rather enforces the obligation of equity and truth. In real merit the fair Sylviana is not your inferior; but if she were, Heaven does not dispense with the rules of justice on the account of airy titles and imaginary distinctions of birth: the highest satisfaction that you can make may, perhaps, never give her that tranquillity she enjoyed in her first humble circumstances. Could you restore her lost innocence, she would be more blessed in that than in all the grandeur to which you can raise her: you may alleviate her misfortune, you cannot make full amends.

Nor can the loss of a tender parent be repaired. With a modest ingenuity the injured nymph confessed her crime to her pious mother, who was so oppressed with the thought of such an infamy, that in a few weeks she expired, and left her beautiful daughter to weep out her solitary hours. Her distress demands your compassion; and by an act of justice to her you will secure your future peace and happiness, and show your gratitude to

MARIANA

LETTER XX.

To VARRIUS.

YOU have soon forgot my dying admonitions, and the promise you made me, to quit the guilty amour you are still pursuing. Can you with deliberation, with reflection, proceed in a design which must, if you succeed, plunge the beautiful Cleora in guilt and infamy, whom you love? what could hatred do more?

But with what horror ought you to reflect on the injury you are doing to the generous Alphonfus, your benefactor! is there nothing engaging in those titles? or rather, are they not words of the most sacred importance? Make it not the future interest of mankind to be your foes.

A man of your pretended honour could not bear the reproach of a lie, and yet you are acting a lie; practising the vilest treachery, and exposing a person of merit to ridicule. This, however unjust, must be the consequence of your success, while he, secure in his own worth and integrity, continues to caress the wretch that injures him. How can you support the stings of his kindness to you?

To this injured, this generous, man, you owe the height of your fortune. It was his interest alone that brought you into public trust and reputation: to requite him you are violating all the laws of humanity, bringing infamy on his family, and secretly endeavouring to rival him in the affections of his charming wife, the object of all his virtuous joys; of which, from whom could he more properly exact the protection than from you!

Can you unmoved recall the distress into which

a crim
What
ness co
I discov
foul.

But
guilt p
horror
jury I
ment w
crowd,
inexpre
life we
charms
to dyin
Whatev
our, yo
my grie
by hear
tention
the prid
temper,
acceptan
some pro
consolati
pers repr

Why sho
And imp
Of Clem
Pronoun
" Thus"
" O thou
" Here t
" Nor pa

But, ho
was, I w

a crime of this nature plunged my heedless youth? What remorse, what confusion, a moment's madness cost me! you was the only confidant to whom I discovered the secret wound it gave my bleeding soul.

But how fatal was that one fall of an extravagant passion to all my future repose! Despair and horror filled my breast, when I considered the injury I had done was beyond reparation: retirement was no more my sanctuary from the noisy crowd, the image of my crime pursued me with inexpressible terrors; the innocent diversions of life were tasteless, music and wit had lost their charms; the proposals of pleasure were like jests to dying men, like recreations to the damned. Whatever decency appeared in my public behaviour, you were witness to the private intervals of my grief, and gave some relief to my anguish, by hearing my complaints with an obliging attention: but Nature, after all its efforts, sunk; the pride of my youth yielded to the gloomy distemper, yet the sincerity of my repentance found acceptance: and, as my last hour approached, some propitious spirit breathed peace and divine consolation to my soul, and in these gentle whispers reproved my infidelity.

Why should presumptuous man, with feeble doubt,
And impotence of thought, mark out the bounds
Of Clemency divine?—What tongue shall dare
Pronounce, with impious vanity, these words?
“Thus far, nor farther, thy exulting waves,
“O thou abyss of sacred Love! shall roll;
“Here thy triumphant billows shall retire,
“Nor pass the bounds of human diffidence.”

But, however serene the last scene of my life was, I would not for all the joys the lower crea-

tion could give, endure the distraction and remorse that one error cost me. Are you softened at the complaints of my misery? be terrified at the approaches of your own.

Thus warned, I hope you will retire: a thousand accidents have hitherto prevented your guilt, and crossed the madness of your love: some pause of reason, some effort of virtue, may at last recover you from the paths of Ruin. Comply with Reason and Virtue, with Honour and Friendship, with your own happiness and that of others; with the interest of the *living*, and the desires of the *dead*.

THEODOSIUS,

T
B
son, w
the pla
art to
neral a
that i
little e
and a
that, w
mean t
shares
word,
men ce
begin t
constitu
Death
action,
duces su
compreh

T H O U G H T S

O N

D E A T H.

Translated from

THE MORAL ESSAYS OF MESSIEURS
DE PORT-ROYAL.

BEYOND the address which men have never to think of Death but as at a very great distance, nor to view it but in some other person, without putting themselves one moment in the place of the *dying*, they have yet a farther art to delude themselves, by forming such a general and confused idea as conceals from them all that is most terrible in Death: they conceive little else of this state but as a privation of sense, and a separation from the commerce of life; so that, when they say a man is dead, they only mean that they see him no more, and that he shares no longer in the affairs of the world. In a word, their idea of Death is only formed on what men cease to do in dying, and not on what they begin to do and feel, though it be that which constitutes its most dreadful circumstance.

Death is indeed a privation of life and human action, but it is a privation which is felt, and produces surprising effects in the soul. In order to comprehend these effects, it is necessary to consi-

der, that while the soul is united to the body, its attention is divided by divers kinds of sensation, imaginations, and passions; it feels the objects which act on the body according to their different manner of influence; and these different ways of perceiving are called *sensations*: on these the soul forms its ideas of all things to which it is united by its passions, and is always employed about these objects; and not only employed, but leans and reposes on them, when it is not entirely united to God: for not being made with a capacity to sustain itself, the soul necessarily seeks some foreign support. It was formed to know and love, but finding nothing within sufficient to satisfy these inclinations, it is forced with some other objects to fill the void it finds in itself. Some of these objects make agreeable impressions on the sense, others content our curiosity and vanity; others relieve the mind, by turning it from things which appear disgusting; some nourish its hopes, while others fortify it against its fears. The soul inclines to all the objects of sense, and is engaged and supported by them in such a manner, that it cannot prove a separation without pain and emotion.

We are not always sensible of these ties; but the soul begins to feel them when it comes to be separated from what it loves: it has then a sense of the privation proportionable to its union with them: so true is that maxim of Saint Augustine, " 'Tis impossible to lose any thing without sorrow, but what we possess without passion."

There are few persons free from an infinite number of these engagements; and though we are ignorant of them till an actual separation discovers what they are, we may, nevertheless, conceive something, by separating ourselves from them in

our th
them

For
to plac
fancies
of his
of his
happy
as the
gives u
cover i
capable
at least
a kind

The
gustling
yet in
though
appease
them w
the pur
ving at
the mind

All th
the sense
goods a
abound
or even
stars, of
St Augu
" poor
" for the

Thus,
comfort
we either
finds some
weariness

our thoughts, and imagining we are deprived of them by some accident.

For instance, take a person who does not seem to place his happiness in the objects of sight, and fancies they contribute nothing to the tranquillity of his mind; and suppose him suddenly deprived of his sight, though in all other circumstances happy, we should find him affected with the loss as the greatest misfortune. The sight of mankind gives us some consolation, because we always discover in them a certain appearance of compassion capable to give us succour in our necessities; which at least indulges our hopes, and those hopes excite a kind of secret joy.

The objects which in some respects are disgusting to the soul, and raise its fears and aversion, yet in other views fail not to sustain it. For though these uneasy passions cannot be altogether appeased, yet the imagination always furnishes them with means or hopes that quiet them; while the pursuit of these means, or the hopes of arriving at the end of their desires, employ and divert the mind.

All the objects to which the soul is joined, by the senses, imagination, reason, or passions, are its goods and riches; and even those we call *poor* abound in these sort of goods: if they want palaces, or even a cottage, they have the sky, the sun, and stars, of which the prospect is so magnificent, that St Augustine says, "It is a greater blessing for the poor to behold the heavenly luminaries than for the rich to view their golden roofs."

Thus, in the privation of some advantages we comfort ourselves with others, true or false, that we either possess or hope for. As the body always finds something to bear it, since even when through weariness it falls to the ground, it there finds a sup-

port; so the soul, sick and feeble, never fails of something to sustain it; and when there is nothing real, forms imaginary supports, on which (vain as they are) it leans.

This necessity of human consolations is not peculiar to vicious men; in some degree the virtuous want their relief. There are few persons so perfect but they have still some remaining tie to the world; fatigued by a long attention to spiritual objects, they are forced, in divers instances, to abandon themselves, and fly for satisfaction to their friends, their children, their estates, to a field of their own planting, or an edifice of their own raising.

This is the condition of Man in this life, which may help us to comprehend what Death is, with the effects it produces. We ought to look on it as the rupture of all that unites us to the creatures; a general separation from the objects of sense; the cancelling all human ties and every pleasure the soul found in them, with a total privation of what it loved and enjoyed on earth. When a man dies, he loses not only what he called his *wealth*, but the firmament, the sun, the stars, the air, the earth, and all the rest of Nature; he loses his body, and all those sensations that gave him pleasure; he loses his relations, his friends, and all mankind; he loses all relief, all support, and, in short, all the objects of his senses and passions.

Indeed, if the soul, in some degree united to these, finds itself also united to God by a holy love, though the privation of the creatures causes some emotion, yet it sinks not into despair: for this Divine principle sustains it; and growing more active, confirms its hopes of being shortly united to and overwhelmed in that abyss of pleasure which alone can satisfy all its capacity of loving.

But
misera
from a
that su
itself o
and en
rison m
fond o
lasting
fruition
der her
It is
state so
give so
fall of
support
tion of
the ann
treme p
its wea
tion it
it is a d
solation
the soul

But who is able to conceive the state of the miserable soul, when it comes by death to be rent from all the objects of its inclinations; from all that sustained it during life, and finds nothing in itself on which to lean: its propensities to love, and enjoy what it loved, become beyond comparison more lively and ardent, while all the soul was fond of escapes, and flies before her with an everlasting flight, without leaving the least hope of fruition; she loses all, finds nothing, all sinks under her, all vanishes and disappears for ever.

It is not possible in this world to comprehend a state so perfectly miserable; all one can say, to give some idea of it, is this:—It is a terrible fall of the soul, by a sudden removal of all its supports; it is an horrible famine, by a privation of its nourishment; it is an infinite void, by the annihilation of all that filled it; it is an extreme poverty, by the entire loss of that which was its wealth; it is a ghastly solitude, by the separation it finds itself in from all union and society; it is a dreadful desolation, by the want of all consolation; it is a cruel rupture, which violently rends the soul from every object of its love.

L

MO

From P

My de

W

The ge
arms, a

Your
and sec
admoni
misery

years ol

to secur

old, inf

able av

gument

contra

the ma

which r

often ca

Volum

L E T T E R S

MORAL AND ENTERTAINING.

P A R T I.

L E T T E R I.

*From PHILARIO to his friend, relating his unhappy
amour with AMASIA.*

My dear Chamont,

WHATEVER reproaches my past follies have deserved, I know my present misfortunes will raise your compassion.— The gentle Amasia is no more! she expired in my arms, and I have paid the last rites to her memory.

Your suspicions were just, that I had perverted and secretly kept her, contrary to all the friendly admonitions you gave me. The spring of my misery was my father's marrying me at twelve years old, (O cursed avarice!) to a girl of ten, only to secure her vast fortune to his family. As I grew old, instead of liking, I conceived an unconquerable aversion to the innocent creature; but no arguments could prevail with my father to break the contract, and I was as obstinate never to complete the marriage. Thus entangled, I grew uneasy; which my sister observing, to divert my chagrin, often carried me with her to visit a young lady,

Volume I.

H

descended from a good family, but decayed in fortune, and obscure. Having never met her before in any public place, I was surpris'd at the sight of such an accomplished beauty, which her fine genius, and a thousand elegancies in her conversation, still heightened. Here the guilty inclination began; which, never presaging its fatal event, I cherish'd, and resolv'd to be happy in spite of the incumbrance of my young wife, who, without any matrimonial cares at heart, divert'd herself with her babies and play-things; while I, privileged by my sister's discretion and intimacy, continued my visits to Amasia, whom we always found with her mother, the pious and discreet Sophronia, whose only fault was being a little too reserved and severe in her temper. But Amasia had a natural disposition to books and solitude, with a temper rather serious and pensive than gay, which made the strictness of her mother's conduct and her own confinement easy. The little society she had was with some grave and good women of Sophronia's acquaintance, who took care to inform her, that all the men of the present age were rakes and atheists, and the young women no better, nor hardly so good as they should be; and that conversing with such sage persons as themselves was the most reputable thing she could do. Amasia assented to these wise maxims, my sister and I being the only acquaintance of a modern character that were admitted to the house. I made myself so agreeable to Sophronia, that I got the office of Reader to the family; but, to my secret mortification, instead of plays, she confin'd me to history or sermons, though my accent was better suited to the stage than the pulpit: however, my fair audience were pleas'd and attentive, and I would rather have taken Orders than have lost my employ-

men
ronia
serv
temp
freel
her c
with
was
frown
I h
lence
lucki
firms
pecte
from
punct
happe
sudden
she to
ing, a
in the
never
This
rent: l
engage
ter inf
I wait
mother
patien
ing her
knowle
Neve
the soft
between
of conse
graces;
languish

ment. But it was not long before cautious Sophronia saw through the disguise of my zeal; and observing a greater gaiety than was usual to Amasia's temper in conversing with me, she told my sister freely her suspicions, intreating her, as she valued her daughter's reputation, to bring me no more with her. My sister, who was perfectly virtuous, was alarmed at the discovery, and would never, from that time, suffer me to accompany her.

I had now no way to let Amasia know the violence of my passion but by a letter, which unluckily fell into her mother's hands; by this, confirmed in her fears, she charged Amasia, as she expected her blessing, to send back any future billet from me unopened. This severe injunction she punctually obeyed till her mother's death, which happened in the midst of this adventure: she was suddenly seized, and finding her sickness mortal, she took the weeping Fair by the hand, demanding, as the last proof of her duty, that she would, in the presence of the all-seeing Deity, promise never to converse with me, or receive my addresses.

This Amasia could not deny a dying tender parent: but, oh! how fatal to herself and me was this engagement! how wild was my grief when my sister informed me of the cruel obligation! However, I waited till the formalities of sorrow due to her mother's memory were past; when, with the impatience of Love, I hastened to her house, and, bribing her servant, got admittance, without Amasia's knowledge, to her chamber.

Never did her charms appear to such advantage: the soft surprise, the modest confusion, the struggle between a tender inclination and the restraint of conscious honour, gave her a thousand nameless graces; whether the yielding beauty, with a gentle languishment, betrayed the passion she had long

disguised, or whether, recovering herself with all the pomp of virtue she reproached my attempt, still she put on resistless charms; but in every transporting variety of her temper I saw my own advantage, nor left the conquest unfinished. With deep repentance I now confess, it gave me an impious pleasure to find Love triumphant over all the pride of Virtue; but Heaven soon avenged its cause, and humbled me in the height of my successful inselence.

I had not long continued my visits to Amasia but an affair of consequence required my absence for some weeks; in the mean time, she was seized with a fever. As she found the symptoms mortal, she wrote, and immediately sent me this letter.

My dear PHILARIO,

WHERE are those ages of love, that heaven, and eternal series of tranquillity and joy, with which you profanely flattered me? The bright delusion, the visionary paradise, is already lost; my sun is setting at noon, an untimely evening draws its shadows over all my promised joys.

That immortal bloom, those heavenly charms, that you told me might bid defiance to sickness and age, are already blasted by a cruel disease: a sudden autumn has withered my prime; the lilies droop, the roses die, chilling Winter has faded my youthful Spring.—But a few days more and I am dust.

This truth sits heavy on my soul, and brings my guilt, with its full aggravation, in view: my mother's dying admonitions, my broken vows, terrify me to distraction. My crime was not the effect of ignorance or inadvertency; pitying angels set the penalties of eternal damnation, and the recompence of an immortal crown, in prospect before

me;
and
ries
by th
ruin
me.
and v
futura
joys o
vine o
so im
from
And
affecti
I woul
oh! m
myself
Last
certain
heaven
"Prepa
can I r
peated
victions
luntary
What
take off
what el
my judg
I led on
done m
reparatio
as well i
interest o
—Can ye
Persuasio
sincere, I

me; the caverns of Death disclosed their terrors, and the realms of celestial Light opened their glories to my active imagination. I was forewarned by the advice of a dying parent of the infamy and ruin to which this soft temptation has betrayed me. I had experienced the satisfaction of reason and virtue; but for you I ventured on present and future perdition, and gave up my title to all the joys of immortality. And now, ye regions of Divine delight, you have no attractions for a mind so impure; I would only fly to you as a retreat from infernal misery.

And yet, too charming youth! you engage my affections; I would live, but (O fatal madness!) I would live for you: by you I was seduced; but, oh! may your soul stand clear of my ruin! It is myself, not you, I would accuse.

Last night (if waking or in a dream I am uncertain) my mother's venerable shade, majestic in heavenly splendour, appeared to me, and bid me "Prepare for the silent tomb!"—What preparation can I make? what penitence can atone for repeated perjury? for crimes against the clearest convictions of heavenly light, and the sanction of voluntary vows?

What figures of speech could you make use of to take off from vices like these their deformity? what eloquence did you employ thus to pervert my judgment? by what infernal enchantment was I led on to mine own destruction?—You have undone me, but I am hopeless! Can you make no reparation? cannot you reverse the injury, and talk as well in the cause of Heaven as you did in the interest of Hell?—Oh make the compassionate trial!—Can you pray?—can you implore mercy for me? Persuasion dwell upon your tongue! Could you be sincere, Heaven perhaps may hear!—My strength

is spent!—I faint!—Fly to my assistance, that at least I may take a last farewell.

AMASIA.

This letter surprised and distracted me; I knew not what I did or said, but I ordered my horses, and returned with all the speed that Love could give me to the idol of my soul, whom I found by intervals in her perfect senses, but in the agonies of death.

The melancholy scene will never quit my memory. Death came, attended by his real and fantastic horrors; he made his approach with every circumstance terrible to nature or reason: never was the passage to his waste dominions more gloomy; never did a departing spirit quit the light of heaven with more reluctance!

“Oh!” she cried, grasping my hand, “whether am I going? to what unknown regions? on what desolate coasts am I doomed eternally to wander? How dark the entrance, how long the passage, that opens before me!—See yonder fullen ghost beckons me away!—another pale spectre summons me to the grave, and bids me mingle with the dead.—How my senses wander!—O for a month’s, a week’s, an hour’s, reprieve!” Then, fixing her eager eyes on mine, she asked, “Cannot you procure this for me after all your boasted love?—I am cited to the supreme tribunal!—have you the hardiness to appear for me?—The whole creation cannot aid me in this extremity!” After which she lay long speechless and convulsed, and, casting a dismal glance at me, with a heavy groan expired.

I could not refuse this sad recital to your request, and my avowed confidence in you. It is some kind of relief to pour my grief into your bosom,

and
wh

From

My d

O H

below
unma
pearan
may m
mifery

Oh,
scene I
tion th
most bl
perpetra

Why
stain th
not bloo
mal cha
I express
invoke t
that I m
for mine
of Hell—
fed hand
gave the
scarce can

and to excite in your's a generous compassion,
which I know you feel, for

The wretched

PHILARIO.

LETTER II.

From CASSANDER, to a gentleman at Venice, relating the murder of his friend.

My dear Friend.

O H! why do I profane that sacred title! If you knew me, you would start, as if the Fiends below had given you that appellation. — But I must unmask myself whatever horror the monstrous appearance gives you: perhaps some sparks of pity may mingle with your aversion, when you find my misery bears some proportion to my guilt.

Oh, think what it is! — Imagine the dreadful scene I would unveil — Recall the most tragical action that was ever represented on the stage, or the most bloody effect of fury that has been really perpetrated in human life.

Why do not the tears that fall from my eyes stain the paper with a sanguine hue? why does not blood instead of ink flow from my pen in dismal characters to mark my crime? why should I express myself in the language of men; and not invoke the infernal Furies to teach me their dialect, that I may give my guilt its proper aggravation? for mine is a deed of darkness, fit for the records of Hell — Murder! — execrable murder! — This cursed hand, that trembles every nerve to relate it, gave the deadly wound! — Horror! — confusion! — scarce can I refrain by the wildest imprecations to

hasten that vengeance at which I tremble:—it will fall too soon, and with some terrible distinction; for mine was a sin of a superior note, marked with uncommon malignity.

In vain am I acquitted at a human tribunal, by the partiality of Justice, and the solicitations of powerful friends, while, by my own conscience, and the divine laws, I am evidently condemned. What plea shall I find against the reproaches of my own reason, that restless monitor within? To what shelter shall I fly from unerring Justice?—Hide me, ye Rocks! cover me, ye Mountains! from the pursuit of eternal Vengeance

My sin was an outrage against Nature, a defiance of all the laws of friendship and humanity.—You dare not believe me when I tell you it was my friend.—Oh distracting thought!—my friend!—the young, the gentle Antonio, that I murdered!—I see him fall!—I see him bleed!—The soul sits quivering on his lips, his eyeballs roll in death!—I behold the gaping wound, the last convulsive pangs, the pale and senseless corpse extended on the ground! the dreadful scene is for ever new, and rises before me with insulting horror. The visionary Terrors haunt my solitary retreats, and damp the joy of society: my days are unacquainted with peace, my nights with rest; the whole creation is an undistinguished chaos; the skies have lost their light, the fields their verdure; every charm is blotted from the face of Nature, the sweetest odours no more refresh me, Harmony with its soothing tones no more delights; I sicken at the most luxurious banquets, the richest wines have lost their flavour; Beauty no more invites, nor Pleasure with her softest eloquence allures me.

Those fair gardens, where Art and Nature combine to rival all that has been fabled of the Vale of

Temp
which
a gloo
solatio
done;
desied

You
artful
with h
less of
her I c
founta
grant b
the cou
night
Anton

I ret
pointed
apart
den wh
The me
arbour
clining
forward
rallery,
with wi
sword, a
Marcella
feet.

My ra
flame ext
returned
the grou
braced hi
his pity t
and, rust
scene.

Tempe, or the Cyprian groves, these soft retreats, which were late my pride and delight, now yield a gloomy prospect, and look like the seats of Desolation and Despair: for here the bloody fact was done; here I violated Nature's great original law, defied eternal Justice, and sealed my own perdition.

You know with what frenzy I doated on the artful Marcella; she was the idol of my thoughts; with her I spent my gay licentious hours, regardless of my honour, my country, or my friends: for her I contrived gardens of pleasure, opened crystal fountains, raised bowers, perfumed with every fragrant blossom, to entertain her; nor once believed she could be capable of ingratitude, till that fatal night when I surprised her with the unhappy Antonio.

I returned more early than usual from an appointed debauch, and not finding Marcella in her apartment, I ran immediately into a private garden where she sometimes took an evening walk. The moon shone clear, and at the entrance of an arbour I saw her sitting with Antonio, loosely reclining his head in her lap. He rose, and came forward smiling, whether with an air of insult or raillery, I did not stay to consider; but flushed with wine, and enraged with jealousy, I drew my sword, and stabbed him through the heart, while Marcella in a swoon lay cold and senseless at my feet.

My rage was spent in a moment, my amorous flame extinguished, and Friendship with all its force returned triumphant on my soul: I threw myself on the ground by the dying youth, supported and embraced him, melted into tears, and called aloud on his pity to forgive me: my servants were alarmed, and, rushing into the garden, beheld the bloody scene.

By this time Marcella was recovered from her swoon, and reproached my rashness, assuring me she had employed all her art to persuade him to comply with that fatal assignation; she frankly owned he had been long the object of her fondest desires, but that till then he had refused any secret appointment with her, from a sense of friendship to me, and justice to his young and beautiful wife, whom he sincerely loved.

This discovery distracted me. I cursed myself and her, and charged her to fly my sight for ever, lest I should double my guilt, and incur myself to murder. I was so far from endeavouring to escape the rigour of the law that I challenged it, called aloud for the ministers of Justice, witnessed against my own life, and avowed the barbarous fact. But however I was cleared by a human verdict, I stand condemned by a higher and more righteous decision: my conscience tells me,

—————The door is shut,
The Judge has pass'd my everlasting doom,
Which all created pow'r can ne'er reverse;
My day's for ever gone, my sun is set
In final darkness, ne'er to rise again;
My summer's spent, eternal winter's come;
The season's past. —————

On me no ray of Mercy e'er will shine,
No smiling beam of hope will ever rise;
Justice divine, and self-condemning Guilt,
Consign me over to eternal woe.

What repentance is there for a wretch who can make no restitution? The injury I have done can never be cancelled. It was desperate, it was irreparable mischief that I brought on the wretched Antonio: I cut off his space of trial, his probation for immortal joys, and tore him from all his fu-

ture
with
his g
nitude
fcoized
spirit
execra
zavern
red the
the du
The
someti
night,
and w
myself
the fam
I came
a gha
tonio.
fatal th
motion
pointed
The
dropper
a cowa
to my c
tend me
at a sha
am furr
more di
We r
ing wor
guage o
conscien
cannot y
could no
but heig

ture hopes of salvation. I perhaps surprised him with all his sins and unrepented follies on his head; his guilt might that instant be in its fullest magnitude, while I, with a more than infernal rage, seized the cursed moment, and sent an immortal spirit to hell. He may now be loading me with execrations, and founding revenge through the caverns of Darkness against a miscreant that barred the gates of Bliss, and opened his passage to the dungeons of Misery and endless Despair.

These are the horrible images that haunt, and sometimes drive, me to the precipice of Ruin. Last night, in a dead and silent hour, I took my sword, and went softly into my garden, resolving to stab myself (so wild are the intervals of my grief) on the same place where I murdered my friend. When I came near I saw, or my fancy only made it real, a ghastly phantom resembling the murdered Antonio, standing on the very spot where I gave the fatal thrust; his countenance wan and doleful, his motionless eyes fixed full on mine, while his hand pointed to the well-imitated wound on his breast.

The sight withered my strength, and the sword dropped from my trembling hand; guilt made me a coward, and with a childish fear I hastily retired to my chamber, calling one of my servants to attend me. So unlike am I grown to myself, I start at a shadow, and shudder at the presage of a dream, am surrounded with ill omens, and tormented with more direful forebodings within.

We talk of racks, of hissing snakes, and gnawing worms; but all the emphasis of human language cannot describe the tortures of an accusing conscience. The united force of Art and Nature cannot yield the least relief: the light of Paradise could not cheer me; the songs of angels would but heighten my remorse, and augment the exqui-

sife anguish ; the gloom of impenetrable night, and the sound of eternal tempests, would sooner sooth these unutterable agonies.

What privilege is my being? why am I cursed with immortality? Oh that my severe Judge, my omnipotent Adversary, would speak me again into my primitive *nothing*, and with one potent word finish my existence!

The beasts are happy, they come forth and keep
Short watch on earth, and then ly down to sleep:
Pain is for man, and, oh! how vast a pain
For crimes that made the Godhead bleed in vain!

Dr Young.

But why do I think it vain for me? Am I of all human race exempted? am I the only distinguished sinner excluded from the benefit of that infinite atonement? am I on earth, or shut up in the infernal prison? Oh stay, thou glimmering beam of Hope, with one heavenly visit cheer my benighted soul. An uncertain *if*, a flattering *possibility*, would be a momentary heaven to me; it would be redemption from Hell, pardon to a reprobate spirit. And yet,

If I must perish, prostrate at thy feet
The humble victim of thy wrath shall fall,
Imploring mercy still; for mercy reigns
Triumphant in thy nature; 'tis thy boast;
The attribute that reigns on this side hell.

My dear Clerimont, excuse my freedom; it is natural for misery to complain: had I been acquainted with a person of more piety and generous compassion than yourself, I had spared you the reading of this melancholy relation, to which your long stay at Venice has made you a stranger. Adieu. I know you will pity

The wretched

CASSANDER.

To B

M

To a
rally
my pe
ture; t
have su
particu

I see
at the
choice
I shoul
and im
mon; th
it shoul
ther; an
have su
mortal:
that I fo

modern
that ant
dear Bel
and hav

I belie
has put
whimfies

It is l
me), but
Volume

L E T T E R III.

To BELINDA, from SYLVIA, to inform her of the reasons of her sudden retreat into the country.

MY dear Belinda, I am indeed got back again,
To harmless plain-work, and to croaking rooks,
Old-fashion'd halls, dull aunts, and godly books.
Pope.

To a view of Nature in that simplicity which you rally so agreeably: but it is here I have recovered my peace, and am again grown a reasonable creature; to which those godly books that you seem to have such a notion of have very much contributed, particularly Bishop Tillotson.

I see you smile, not in malice, but good nature, at the sober confession, and want of delicacy in the choice of my reading: it diverts you, I know, that I should let Dryden and Otway ly stupidly by me, and impertinently spend an hour in reading a sermon; that when I am so well at ease in this world, it should ever enter into my head to think of another; and that, in the bloom of eighteen, I should have such a gloomy disposition as to think myself mortal: and, if you will forgive me, I will own, that I sometimes read the Bible, in contempt of all modern refinements, and hope to form my life on that antiquated scheme. These are, I confess, my dear Belinda, a very unfashionable set of thoughts, and have nothing in them modish or polite.

I believe you will be very inquisitive to find what has put these odd, these strange unaccountable whimsies into my brain.

It is love, (you start—you pity—you pray for me), but it is love, a tender hopeless passion that

Volume I.

I

has had this surprising effect! It is an absolute despair of being happy in this world that has put me on endeavours to secure the happiness of the next. Could I have possessed the idol of my soul I had been at rest, and had lost the relish of superior joys.

But mine, with confusion I own it, was a criminal affection, forbid by Earth and Heaven; my bliss was prohibited by laws human and divine. This confession will surprise you; but could you know the severity of my conduct you would excuse me. I have torn myself from the sight of the lovely youth for ever, though I could have lost the light of the sun with less reluctance. My hasty retreat into the country was free and voluntary, and not, as was thought, the effect of my father's command. I was sincere, Heaven is my witness, in my desire to free myself from the criminal passion, and I thought the most certain way to conquest was by flight.

You know the tour my brother made to Paris brought him acquainted with Monsieur le Comte de R——; and when he came into England my brother returned with his family. I was in Town, and waited on Madame la Comtesse, who did me the honour to detain me some time with her.

Monsieur le Comte was one of the handsomest and best-bred men in the world, and had as much of the English gravity as was agreeable to my own temper; which made me find his conversation very grateful and entertaining: nor had I the least suspicion that there was any hazard in such a harmless satisfaction. I had conversed in Town with as much freedom as a virtuous education allowed, and kept an equal indifference, without the least inclination to love, or even pretending to hate, any mortal man.

T
vanit
laun
noco
thoug
me o
kindl
posin
merit
But
easily
specio
of con
and in
its na
the fa
short,
else in
not ex
But
gravat
strange
monstr
la Com
and co
and for
tiful an
with w
myself
as I tho
charmin
jealous,
Howe
licacy in
sense of
a thoug
involun

The Comte was perfectly well-bred, and my vanity made me interpret every little turn of gallantry as the mark of some peculiar value and innocent friendship he had for me. Any other thought would have shocked my delicacy, and put me on my guard, against the guilty passion I found kindling in my own breast; which, instead of opposing, I indulged as gratitude, and a just sense of merit.

But I was soon sensible of the delusion, and how easily Vice betrays an unguarded mind under the specious disguise of Virtue. I found this freedom of conversation would prove fatal to all the peace and innocence of my mind, which had now lost its native calmness, and I began to experience all the fantastic effects of spleen, vapours, caprice; in short, an uneasiness with myself, and every thing else in the world, the charming Comtesse herself not excepted.

But this set my guilt before me in its full aggravation. Envy and Deceit had till now been strangers to my breast, which made me start at the monstrous forms; every new favour from Madame la Comtesse reproached me with violating the trust and confidence she had in my truth and virtue, and for having a wish that she had been less beautiful and deserving. The affection and intimacy with which she treated me gave me an horror for myself, and I was again generous and sincere, and, as I thought, perfectly confirmed in virtue, till the charming Comte appeared, when I found myself jealous, unjust, and perverted to vice in a moment.

However, I disguised my folly, from a secret delicacy in point of reputation, and an unassisted sense of honour. I am ashamed to tell you I had a thought that needed a disguise, though it was involuntary and unallowed: but I was an ill dis-

sembler, and have some reason to believe the real disposition of my heart was perceived by the Comte, who one evening surpris'd me reclined on the side of a fountain repeating these lines :

Come, blest'd Religion, with thy angel's face
 Dispel this gloom, and brighten all the place !
 Drive this destructive passion from my breast,
 Compose my sorrows, and restore my rest !
 Show me the path the fainted-virgins trod,
 Wean me from earth, and raise my soul to God !
 No more let guilty Love my heart inflame !

The Comte understood English perfectly well : but I recovered myself with as good a grace as I could, and put on more gaiety and assurance than was indeed natural to my disposition ; and, to conceal my disorder, left him with precipitancy, and returned to the Comtesse, who was in her apartment reading the story of Rhetea in the *Life of Cyrus*. She asked me, *How I liked it ?* The question, I am persuaded, was accidental ; but, with some confusion, I answered, *That I thought it well told*. However, it awakened my remorse, and gave me an exquisite sense of the injustice of my secret inclinations.

From this moment I resolv'd to go back into the country to conceal and conquer my folly. The tenderness and unaffected concern the Comtesse express'd in parting with me confirm'd my virtue, and gave me a secret confusion for the injustice of having wish'd her less happy. The calmness and sanctity of my soul seem'd to be restored, and I had left the place a conqueror, if the Comte had not led me to the coach, and, by an accidental sigh, and a sort of a serious air in his face, given my mind a softer turn, and convinced me of the vanity of human confidence, and that I had triumphed without a victory.

By the Martins.

B
 refle
 sects
 infin
 rene
 an in
 of m
 the c
 pleat
 now
 digni
 happ
 with
 views
 certai
 w
 Sh
 Ou
 Be
 In
 Ad
 you to
 dear j
 imagin
 have
 foul, a
 I am

See the

But the retirement of the country, and serious reflection, soon freed me from the tumultuous effects of a guilty passion: the scene altered with infinite advantage, and all grew peaceful and serene. I am now reconciled to myself, and find an ineffable satisfaction in the silent approbation of my own conduct; a satisfaction superior to all the empty applause of the crowd. I reflect with pleasure on the happy change: my soul seems now in its proper situation, and, conscious of its dignity, looks above this world for its rest and happiness: I am almost in a state of insensibility with regard to mortal things, and have fixed my views on those infinite delights which will be the certain rewards of virtue.

What is there here to fill these vast desires?
Should Fancy all her dazzling scenes display,
Our wishes unconfin'd would wander still
Beyond the limits of these narrow skies,
In search of boundless and immortal joys.

Adieu, my dear Belinda: as long as I leave you to the quiet possession of the dear Town and its dear joys you will not envy me all that a gay imagination can form of future pleasures.—I have trusted you with the inmost secrets of my soul, and know I can depend upon your fidelity.
I am

Your unalterable Friend,

SYLVIA.

See the sequel of this story in *Letter V. Part II.*

L E T T E R IV.

To EUSEBIUS, from a Deist.

WHERE shall I find rest? The wide creation denies it. I have run through all the varieties of human folly, and searched every vanity below the sun. I have tried what was to be found in madness; women, wine, and frolic have divided my hours; and I am now trying what satisfaction Wisdom and Philosophy can yield. You have made me at last a convert to natural religion, and turned me into a sort of a virtuous Heathen. Morality in its practice is no longer my aversion; I begin to think reason and immortality the highest advantages of humanity. That there is a God all Nature cries aloud through all her works; and while I am attending those sacred dictates, in such raptures as these I often address myself,

To the unknown God.

Whate'er thou art, thou Excellence unknown!
'Tis thee through all thy various works we seek:
These secret languishments, these fierce desires,
Howe'er licentious, free and unconfin'd,
Pursue unseen an object infinite;
Through ev'ry fair disguise the leading God
Allures our eager souls: that rosy blush,
Those sparkling eyes, and soft enchanting smiles,
Receiv'd their charms from thee. Beauty is thine,
In all its conq'ring powers: in thee
We trace up Pleasure to its sacred source.

We meet thee in the balmy western breeze,
The fragrance of the Spring, the spicy isles,

And all Arabia breathes its sweets from thee.
From harmony to harmony we rise
To that superior skill which tun'd the spheres,
Gave melody to Gabriel's heavenly lyre,
And ev'ry moving grace to Rolli's song.

Whatever sacred force in Music lyes,
The dying strain that calms the wildest care,
Or loftier note that prompts to glorious deeds;
Th' inspiring God dwells in the mystic sound,
And charms and captivates the list'ning Soul
Through all her soft capacities of joy.

But what art thou, the secret spring of Life,
Supreme in all perfections, though unknown?
More lovely than the fairest of thy works;
For thou art still beyond similitude.

Still rising with distinguish'd eminence,
In perfect beauty and unrivall'd glory.

But what those beauties, what those glories, are
No mortal eye has seen, nor boldest sight
Of Fancy, in her gayest scenes, conceiv'd.

Some soft celestial echoes from afar,
Some glimm'ring rays, with a reflected light,
Attract our souls, and kindle warm desires,
Impetuous wishes, and aspiring hopes,
Which own no bounds, but, infinitely free,
Break through created limits with contempt,
And seek the great Original of bliss.

But, oh! if Love—if Love's the boasted name,
And darling attribute, reveal thyself,
Unfold the heav'nly wonders of thy face,
And stand in open majesty confess'd?

Why was I form'd with these aspiring thoughts
And elegant desires, these boundless aims,
That reach at nothing short of God himself?
If 'tis a bliss impossible to man,
If thou wilt never fill these vast desires,
Why were they rais'd? this eminence of thought
Is but my torment.—Oh! recall again
This glorious curse, this thankless gift, my reason!
This immortality, my dread! my horror!

Far rather had I flourish'd in a plant,
 And only reach'd a vegetable life,
 Open'd my blossoms to the rising sun,
 And dropp'd their beauties ere the evening close;
 Or had I mounted with the feather'd race
 In heights of air, or with my fellow brutes
 At freedom rang'd the trackless desert o'er,
 Slept in a den, or stretch'd my careless bulk
 Secure in open fields, heedless of good
 Or evil past, or present, or to come!

Oh, envy'd lot to mine! if I must live
 Eternal years excluded from thy face,
 Be it in earth, or air, or in the deep,
 Where thou art absent ev'ry place is hell!

The fields and woods are often witnesses to these soliloquies, while I fly from man to converse with the great Spirit of Nature; for you have at last convinced me of a Divine Presence, with whose immensity I am surrounded. To this conscious Mind I sometimes address myself; with pleasure I grow acquainted with this propitious Being, and adore him as the spring of my existence. I seem to find some new capacities of happiness awake in my soul. I languish for some unknown joys, some yet unexperienced pleasures, and grow confident, that the Power who raised these desires will at last gratify them. That silence, that self-reflection and retirement, that was lately my horror, is now become my delight; while I am attending the dictates of Reason, and sincerely endeavouring to know the will of that Divine Mind, who must be too beneficent to leave me in my present doubts, while I am sincerely seeking the heavenly illumination.

Thus far, my dear Eusebius, your arguments have had success. I have the highest obligations to you for not suffering me to degrade myself into the rank of animals, and for persuading me to

affirm
that

To M

Mad

H

you b
the fa
moder
disguis
red al

Oh,
is I fir
must d
your e
ness: l
you to
of that

I am
lieve m
recover

I kno
me; yo
and wh
melanch
ven tha
that I v
my reat

assume the dignity of a reasonable creature. In that capacity I am

Your most obliged humble servant,

PHILANDER.

L E T T E R V.

*To Mrs * * * *, from AMORET, giving an account of her criminal passion for SEBASTIAN.*

Madam,

HOW shall I begin? what language can paint the confusion of my thoughts? which, could you be sensible of, it would be some apology for the fatal secret I would discover. I am yet but a modest sinner, and can neither excuse nor dare disguise my guilt from one who, till now, has shared all the secrets of my soul.

Oh, think what I would say! imagine what it is I find such reluctance to discover, and which I must discover, though it costs me all your esteem! your esteem, which has been my pride and happiness: but even that I will resign rather than suffer you to injure your own character by a continuance of that friendship I have forfeited.

I am not that modest innocent person you believe me: there is no disguising my infamy, nor recovering my lost honour.

I know you are surprised; you hardly credit me; you would fain believe I have belied myself; and what I have told you is the effect of spleen, melancholy, any thing but truth. Would to Heaven that it was all frenzy and wild imagination! that I were innocently unhappy! that I had lost my reason and kept my virtue!

Oh, heav'nly Virtue! thine's a sacred flame,
And still my soul pays homage to thy name.

Ye chaste and holy Thoughts, that once possessed
my soul, return again! return, ye smiling Scenes
of innocence and peace! Ye secret Consolations of
religion! ye gentle Whispers of conscience! speak
peace again to my unquiet breast!

I have not yet begun my fatal story:—oh,
let it never be told! let it be lost in eternal obli-
vion!—but that is impossible, it is registered on
my heart.

In what dark cavern shall I hide my head?
Where seek retreat, now Innocence is fled?

If my penitence had obtained pardon from Hea-
ven, the public would speak my infamy aloud.
How am I fallen! from what height of reputation
to the lowest contempt! This, to a mind that still
retains the nicest sense of honour, is an affliction
insupportable. I have no refuge from the insults
of the world but solitude, and thither the thoughts
of my guilt and infamy pursue me; the country
shades, the seats of Tranquillity and Peace, afford
me no relief.

Alone through unfrequented shades I rove,
And hope the sweets of Solitude to prove:
But at my sight each verdant prospect wears
A gloomy view, and every plant appears
To bend its top, o'ercharg'd with dewy tears.
What joy can I in these recesses find!
What beauteous scenes can please a guilty mind?
In vain the Sun his morning pride displays;
I turn my eyes, and sicken at his rays:
The silver moon, and sparkling stars by night,
Torment me too with their officious light.

Heaven and earth seem to reproach me, and join
with the convictions of my own reason, which

folly
has
peace
prud
cepts

I v
circu
my s
emph
many
my o
which
never
betra

Tin
shade
doing
tains,
ened
sooth
seduce
quired
encha

Wa
He
Diff

Whi
Power
for eve
these o
be lost
tained
humbl
less am
bowers

folly approves the rules I have violated. To what has my folly reduced me? where shall I seek for peace when I am at variance with myself, and my prudence is inconsistent with those heavenly precepts to which my mind assents?

I would tell you the story of my ruin, but every circumstance fills me with confusion. You know my seducer, and what a train of artifices he has employed to complete it. You, Madam, gave me many gentle admonitions; but I was too secure in my own resolution, and that disguise of honour which the false Sebastian always avowed, and never with more assurance than when his flattery betrayed me into his infamy.

Time and place, the evening gloom and verdant shade, every circumstance conspired to my undoing. The whispering gales, the falling fountains, the green retreats and flowery scenes, heightened the soft temptation: all Nature seemed to sooth the tender passion, and gave my charming seducer new advantages; his form, his aspect, acquired unusual graces, and his language was all enchantment.

———And, oh! his charming tongue
Was but too well acquainted with my weakness;
He talk'd of love, and all my melting heart
Dissolv'd within my breast———

Ottway.

Whither is my imagination wandering? Ye Powers of Chastity, assist me! blot this guilty scene for ever from my soul! let the remembrance of these criminal delights no more return! let them be lost in darkness and oblivion! let me be entertained with more pure and lasting joys in some humble retreat, far from the noise and thoughtless amusements of the world! I ask not princely bowers, or artful walks; let me pass my hours in

some unfrequented shade, where the images of Vanity and Sin may never enter!

Oh, celestial life! how do these peaceful scenes sooth and flatter my soul! through what enchanting paths does my imagination stray! Ye vain Grandeurs of the world, adieu: adieu, ye idle Amusements and fantastic Pleasures: what shadows do you now appear! how unsubstantial to these serious prospects of Bliss! Let me dwell unmolested here; let me lose the remembrance of this busy world, and hear no more of its distracting follies! here let me attend the happy period that shall untie the band of life; and then,

Let some fair spirit, form'd alone for love,
That's happy in its full enjoyment,
Tune the celestial lute, and gently sing
A requiem to my soul; call out my life
By the sweet pow'rs of heav'nly harmony:
While on a rosy couch I rest my head,
And in the languishments of Love divine
Resign my breath, and wake in endless joy.

In the height of distraction I subscribe,

MADAM,

Your's, &c.

LETTER VI.

From EVANDER to a Libertine.

YOU must excuse me, my Lord, if I should not yield to the conviction of your rally, nor damn myself in mere good manners and ceremony. I must confess, never was a bad cause defended with more wit and vivacity; but I dare not venture on eternal misery in the gaiety of my heart, nor give up my hopes of salvation for a jest.

Nor can you blame me, my Lord, for being serious in things which, to my apprehension, are the greatest realities, though, to your politer imagination they may appear but dreams and chimeras. Till I can change my opinion, I should act unreasonably to desist from my pursuit of what I think the noblest end of human actions.

As for your objection against my scheme, that it is a happiness future and uncertain; your's, my Lord, has the same disadvantage.

Is there any mortal that thinks himself happy in any present enjoyments? Some uneasy circumstance or other mingles itself with all sublunary bliss; it is some future expectation that engages the mind. To-morrow's assignation with a jovial friend or mistress depends on so precarious a thing as life; which thousands, before another rising sun, must resign, and your's, perhaps, may be among the destined number; and in that very moment your expectations perish, and prove as visionary as the celestial pleasures and divine entertainments that you turn into ridicule.

On your scheme it is but a breath betwixt a man, a reasonable being, the Lord of the creation, —and a clod of earth, a shadow, a mere nothing. If the machine should keep a proper situation to drink to sing, to laugh and dance, a thousand other chances may start up to disappoint the promised joy; which, if you reach, fruition itself will deceive your hopes, and leave you nothing but anxiety and remorse.

This is what can never happen to me, though all my bright expectations should prove a fiction; as soon as I reach the fatal period I shall be past reflection; my gaudy hopes and being will end at once, and leave me for ever insensible of my loss: in the mean time, as long as the dream of

life lasts, the very prospect of boundless and immortal pleasures must give the mind a greater satisfaction, in mere speculation, than all those fleeting imperfect enjoyments whose fallacy you every moment discover.

Let my plan of happiness be ever so visionary, it is noble; let it be invented by the craft of priests or politicians, it is superior to all the luxury by which the greatest Libertine ever proposed to gratify his desires.

Riches and grandeur, wine and mirth, music and beauty, are the height of your wishes; but all these either fatigue the mind with anxiety, or languish and sleep on the senses. You have often owned to me, that a series of these enjoyments has left you nothing but vanity and vexation; and have, in your reasonable intervals, confessed, that these are no more than specious names, and shadows of some *original good* that the mind through every disguise pursues.

This is the supreme excellency after which my soul aspires; if it is imaginary, the mind must yet be enlarged by grasping at the enjoyment of infinite happiness: for I dare confess my end is the same with your's; it is pleasure we both pursue; and as at present it consists chiefly in expectation, mine must surpass your's by the proportion of its object.

You have set your night for the Opera, to hear Faustina sing; I expect the period when the curtain of mortality shall be drawn, and the scenes of eternal glories open, and angels solace me with celestial harmony.

The flowery spring returns to love, and your soft retirement into one of the fairest seats in England entertains you; while my imagination wanders through the heavenly Paradise, and recreates itself by blissful streams among the trees of Life.

You attend the happy period that, after long impatience, shall give the charming Zephalinda to your vows; while a diviner flame animates my soul in the search of infinite Perfection.

But tell me whence this wondrous flame began,
Ye Angels who behold the face of God!

I call the worms my brethren, and confess
Corruption is my father; yet high as your's
My wishes rise, the same divine ambition,
The same bright object, kindles my desires.

O lovelier than the fairest of thy works,
Nothing below thyself, great as thou art,
Exalted and supreme—nothing below
Thyself can ever fix my restless thought.
These faculties were made alone for thee,
Or I had never rais'd a wish so high.

Necessity of Nature leads me on;
My reason has no theme, my life no end:

Love, the superior passion of my soul,
Finds nothing equal to its dignity.

Give all the sun goes round to those that seek
A happiness beneath the Sov'reign Good;
One gentle look, one heav'nly smile, of thine
Has blotted ev'ry charm from Nature's face,
And faded all the glory of the world.

Why dost thou bid me listen to the voice
Of Nature, in her just melodious round?

Why dost thou bid me trace the flow'ry fields,
The Spring's gay verdure, or with wondring eyes
Survey the circle of the firmament?

What is there lovely on the spacious earth,
Or in th'etherial round, compar'd to thee?
Compar'd to thee, the stars can boast no light;
The sun itself, in modest clouds conceal'd,
Pays homage to the great eternal Spring
Of sacred life, and uncreated light.

Whate'er at utmost stretch the mind of man
Can form, in its unbounded range of thought,
Of bright, or fair, or justly regular,

When Fancy launches out to worlds unknown,
And paints beyond created beauty fair,
Still thou art fairer and more perfect still.

I know, my Lord, you will pardon this poetical excursion, since I have been led to it by your example.

I need not make an apology for continuing to insult you with my privileges, since I have no design in it but what is abstractly disinterested and charitable. A place of trust or honour employs your thoughts, and calls for your perpetual attendance; and when you think yourself secure of the gaudy trifle, your pretensions may be lost by a momentary caprice: but my expectations run higher than any dignity this world can boast; it is a celestial crown and kingdom that fires my ambition; I am in pursuit of infinite honours, and grasp the glories of immortality.

You see, my Lord, in every respect, in love and glory, I have the advantage of you. Suppose my pretensions as visionary as you will, nothing can be more exalted than such a notion of happiness: it is endless and complete, unclouded with pain or sorrow; whereas you can never boast of being perfectly at ease, nor to taste pleasure unmingled with many mortifying evils; in your gayest flights you cannot flatter yourself with such views.

But this prospect is all peaceful and serene, nor a moment's anxiety shall rise to break the serenity of eternal joy. Whatever holy cheer laid the plan, it is no dishonour to be thus deluded. Let poets, poets, or politicians, be the inventors, a thousand times blessed be the happy genius that provided this relief to soften the draggin of mortal life! When tired and sick of all mortal vanities the mind escapes itself in fragrant flowers, sports in flowery lawns, and wanders through Elysian groves, where

the raptured fancy drinks at the fountains of Life, and bathes in rivers of immortal Pleasure!

Death, the gloomy period of all your hopes, in the height of your luxury and most jovial entertainments, insults your imagination with this horrid aspect; but this ghastly phantom, this universal terror, brightens into a smile, and in an angel's form beckons me away to endless rest. That untried gulf, that you expect will at once swallow up your joys and existence, appears to me a passage to undecaying life and pleasure.

And let it still be granted that my expectation of future bliss proves a fiction, and Christianity a mere delusion, I shall be insensible of remorse or shame for my credulity, and shall lie down as gloriously with the clods of the valley, and sleep as sweetly in my primitive dust, as your Lordship.

But, oh! should the objects of the Christian faith prove true, what a wild hazard do you run! what limits will your confusion find! Your shame will be as lasting as your misery: you will reproach yourself for ever, and be exposed to the derision of the wretched society to which you are joined—

Il n'y a rien plus réel que cela, ni de plus terrible, j'en suis sûr que nous voudrions les braver. "There's nothing more real than that, nothing more terrible, let us put on never so many stout airs."

I have, you find, obeyed your commands, and sent you my thoughts on this subject, to convince your Lordship how much I am

Your devoted humble servant,

EVANS.

LETTER VII.

From HERMINIUS to his sister, acquainting her with the unhappy effects of his passion for CLEORA.

My dear Sister,

IT is with great pleasure I obey your command, in letting you know the disposition of my heart to the charming Cleora. To one whose thoughts were less refined than your's my discourse would be incredible; but you are a sort of Platonic, and may, perhaps, approve the effects of a generous passion, and give credit to the reformation it has made in my life.

You will forgive me, Madam, for being once in the right when I have dissented from you, since it is the only instance I have to boast of. Had I been governed by your advice, and fled the fair Cleora, instead of conversing with her, I might have been an unreformed Libertine; but she set Virtue in my view with its most charming advantages; I saw an angel in her form, and heard celestial music in her voice: she was the messenger of the skies to convert me; I owned the credentials: and yielded to the heavenly inspiration.

You know, my dear Sister, that her dawning beauty had made an impression on my heart before I went to travel.

I watch'd the early glories of her eyes,
As men for day-break watch the eastern skies.

Dryden.

I left England with the flattering hopes of finding her free at my return, and with a full intention

to make my addresses to her. While I staid at Rome, that imperial seat of Vice, the only loose amour I had was with a beautiful Italian who something resembled the matchless Cleora, who was still the mistress of my reasonable affections.

But how great was the anguish of my soul when, after all my gay expectations, the first news that surpris'd me at my return was, that she was just married to Philaret, the man that of all the world I would not have hated or injured; a man that had every amiable quality, and was the pride and joy of all his acquaintance: nor could I forget some former obligations his popular interest had laid on me. In this exigence I resolv'd to dispense with the ceremony of paying my compliments to him, that I might avoid the sight of his lovely bride; nor did I frequent any public place where I was likely to meet her.

But at last the fatal interview came, and, in the drawing-room, sparkling as an angel, I saw the lovely creature. From this moment I became an apostate to Virtue, and, secretly renouncing all the ties of Truth and Honour, resolv'd, with great deliberation, to be a villain. This noble design was the subject of my retired contemplations. With what wild, what impious, soliloquies have I whisper'd to the Groves and Streams, wishing the laws of Heaven cancelled, and the state of Nature, in the fiction of a Golden Age, real! These senseless lines have often express'd my infamous raptures:

O siecle plus heureux mille fois pour les hommes,

Que le siecle dur ou nous sommes!

Non parceque la terre en cet age parfait

Donnoit tous les fruits sans culture,

Que les fleuves estoient de lait,

Que le miel dans nos bois couloit sur la verdure:

Mais parceque l'honneur, ce tyran des nos ames,

*Cette trompeuse idole, & ce phantome vain,
N'avoit sur les coeurs une pouvoir souverain,
Et ne s'opposoit pas aux amoreuses flames *.*

Such were my secret extravagancies, the entertainments of my solitary walks; but in the height of my folly Heaven did not entirely abandon me.

I took all handsome opportunities to follow and converse with the fair Cleora, a favour she never refused me; if she had, I should have entertained more hopes than from the manner in which she treated me. I attended her coach, her chair, haunted her at public places, ogled, stared, sighed, and practised all the modern sopperies of Love, which she never thought it worth her while to observe; and, to my great mortification, I found I neither pleased nor molested her: all my dumb eloquence and mute address was lost on her; she minded it no more, nor perhaps so much, as she would the frolics of a monkey. I might give myself what postures and airs I thought most becoming, and act the indolent or languishing lover without interruption; she looked as if she had no manner of apprehension what I was doing, or what I intended. My breath had been as well employed in talking of darts and flames to the plants and trees; the jargon was so perfectly unintelligible to her, that she either answered nothing to the

* O happy age! a thousand times more blest'd
Than the hard state by mortals now possess'd!
Not because bounteous Nature did then yield
Her fruits spontaneous to the soil untill'd;
Nor that the rivers flow'd with milky waves,
Nor that the trees drop'd honey from their leaves;
But because Honour, phantom of controul,
False airy idol, tyrant of the soul,
Then to our am'rous flames no bounds consign'd,
Then knew no sovereign power o'er the mind.

purpose, or turned the discourse to some grave moral subject.

And as she had the finest turn of wit, and the most graceful manner of speaking, in the world, every thing she said made an impression on my soul; every vice on which she set a mark of infamy, though ever so modish, lost its credit with me; and every virtue, though ever so severe, seemed practicable with her applause.

The manner in which she treated my passion set me in a very ridiculous light to myself. The vanity appeared unpardonable that inspired me with the hopes of rivalling the happy man to whom, in the sight of Heaven, with her vows she had sincerely given her esteem and tenderest affection. Whatever regard was due to such distinguishing merit as Philaret's she gave him: nothing could be more soft and engaging than her whole behaviour to him. Her modesty was unaffected; truth and justice appeared in all her actions: in the gayest bloom of youth, and triumph of beauty, she practised the strictest rules of piety. This, joined to the most gentle disposition, and a genius turned to every thing that is beautiful and polite, makes her one of the brightest characters of the age.

A thousand times blessed be the heavenly Power that kept me back from the ruin I courted! and, by the example and conversation of the lovely woman, made me a profelyte to Virtue, and guided me to a rational and lasting happiness!

But, my dear Sister, this unfortunate event shall not encourage me to condemn your advice on any future occasion; and, in this instance, I know you will forgive,

Madam,

Your most obedient humble servant,

HERMINIUS.

LETTER VIII.

From BELLAMOUR to CARLOS, relating the story of his love to ALMEDA.

I AM glad to find you so entirely satisfied, so completely blessed, amidst the noise and amusements of the Town. I congratulate your enjoyment of assemblies, operas, and masquerades; but all your boasted pleasures cannot raise my envy at present, nor tempt me back from the country.

My mind is in such a fantastic disposition, that I find more satisfaction in talking to trees, streams, and echoes, than to reasonable creatures. I converse frequently with a row of willows that grow on the banks of a neighbouring river, and have often called them to witness what they neither hear nor understand. The streams are often swelled with my tears without ever rising to a deluge; and the rocks melted at my complaints without losing one atom of their bulk.

But, while I laugh at myself, I shall easily forgive you if you should take the same liberty, and enter into the ridicule of my character: you are a lover yourself of the modern jovial kind, quite the reverse of the solemn antiquated form of Pastor Fido, Don Quixote, and your humble servant.

All this raillery is forced, and only used in policy, that I may tell my story with a good grace to a man of your gaiety.

You know how the young Elvira was left to my father's care by her mother, and, by a contract between both our parents, was, from her childhood, designed a wife for me; but neither her beauty nor vast fortune have had the least influ-

ence on
converse
thought
for me.
his enga
desired r
lemnity,
of paren
on condi
I had for
no other
whether

But w
the Mall
I ever fa
eyes larg
five in h
significan
then met
for me by
state we
flattered
I spent m
meet her
able, tha
avoid me
culous by
left the v
a day or
I was det
vain to fo

In this
from my
a wood th
here I fou
lovely for
Milton in

ence on me to make any addressee to her. I have conversed with her with great indifference, and thought I had reason to believe she had the same for me. But my father, in order to make good his engagements, when he was on his deathbed, desired me to promise him, with the greatest solemnity, to marry her. As he had been the best of parents, I promised him without any reluctance, on condition Elvira did not refuse me, of which I had some secret hopes: however, as I then had no other inclination, I was in no manner of care whether she accepted or refused me.

But when I was last in Town, and walking in the Mall, I met one of the most agreeable women I ever saw; she was tall, and exactly shaped, her eyes large and fine, with something soft and pensive in her air, something of thought, of wit, of significancy, which I cannot express. Whether I then met my fellow-mind that had been paired for me by Destiny, or whether in some pre-existent state we had been acquainted, I know not; but I flattered myself she observed me without contempt. I spent my time in following or endeavouring to meet her, and at last had made myself so remarkable, that she seemed to think herself obliged to avoid me. As far as I could, without being ridiculous by my curiosity, I inquired after her, but left the walks uniformed who she was. I was in a day or two forced to go into the country, where I was detained for some months, endeavouring in vain to forget the fair stranger I had seen.

In this temper I was taking a solitary ramble from my own seat, till I came to the entrance of a wood that was near the Earl of ———'s park: here I found, surprising as a heavenly vision, the lovely form that had charmed me, sitting with a Milton in her hand, which she was reading with

such attention, that I spoke to her before she saw me. She immediately withdrew into the park, but I followed her, and told her, the happiness of my life depended on her attention, which in the most modest manner she at last granted, and heard the soft relation. That little success gave me such hopes, that I pursued the affair on every opportunity I could prevail with her to give me: for as my fortune and rank were superior to her's, which was only dependent, she acted with great caution, and convinced me that she possessed all that true grandeur of mind that conscious virtue inspires. Her wit, the elegance of her behaviour, with a thousand graces that attended her whole conduct, secured her conquest, and confined all my hopes of earthly happiness to the possession of the charming maid: nor did I fear the least obstacle to my wishes; for I had told her my engagement to my father, and the full certainty I had, (as indeed I thought) of Elvira's refusal; which I now went to ask, with a perfect assurance that I should receive it. Her coldness did not seem to have the air of affectation, but rather the effect of a secret aversion. I looked on myself to be a sort of incumbrance entailed on her by her ancestors, of which she would be joyfully freed; and in the gaiety of my heart made her an offer of my person, such as it was, without the least expectation of being accepted; as I was, to my unspeakable confusion. She perceived my disappointment with a modest but tender concern, and put me into a disorder that I could not easily recover.

I knew my love to the beautiful Almeda was a secret to every body but ourselves; and if it had been known, I would do Elvira the justice to confess, there was a sweetness in her temper almost incapable of malice: however, I durst not discover

the affair
went in
the disap
funk int
but soon
resolution
inclosed.

To Br

I BEG
again
your eng
barbarou
was an o
mily. I
me: I wa
known to
future di

I am j
to Elvira
that com
me; and
from the
all the ch

See the f

the affair without Almeda's consent; to whom I went in the height of my distress, to let her know the disappointment: she grew pale at the relation, sunk into my arms, and only spoke with tears; but soon left me, without letting me know her resolution, till within a few hours I received the inclosed.

TO BELLAMOUR,

I BEG you to forget, and never think of seeing me again, nor let any thing tempt you to violate your engagement to a dying father. It would be barbarous in you to abandon the fair Elvira, who was an orphan cast on the protection of your family. Do not entertain one anxious thought for me: I was the care of Providence when I was unknown to you, and that will be my refuge in all future distress.—Adieu for ever.

ALMEDA.

I am just going to discover our mutual passion to Elvira, and to show her this letter, in hopes that compassion will prevail with her to refuse me; and cannot but flatter myself with success, from the gentleness of her disposition. I am, in all the changes of Fortune,

My dear CARLOS,

Sincerely your's,

BELLAMOUR.

See the sequel of this story in *Letter xvii. Part II.*

LETTER IX.

To PHILARIO, *from the Duke of * * * *, written on his deathbed.*

BEFORE you receive this my final state will be determined by the Judge of all the earth; in a few days at most, perhaps in a few hours, the inevitable sentence will be past, that shall raise me to the heights of happiness, or sink me to the depths of misery. While you read these lines, I shall be either groaning under the agonies of absolute despair, or triumphing in the fulness of joy.

It is impossible for me to express the present disposition of my soul, the vast uncertainty I am struggling with; no words can paint the force and vivacity of my apprehensions: every doubt wears the face of horror, and would perfectly overwhelm me, but for some faint beams of hope which dart across the tremendous gloom. What tongue can utter the anguish of a soul suspended between the extremes of infinite joy or eternal misery? I am throwing my last stake for eternity, and tremble and shudder for the important event.

Good God! how have I employed myself! what enchantment has held me! in what delirium has my life been past! what have I been doing! while the sun in its race, and the stars in their courses, have lent their beams, perhaps only to light me to perdition.

I never waked till now. I have but just commenced the dignity of a rational being: till this instant I had a wrong apprehension of every thing in nature. I have pursued shadows, entertained myself with dreams; I have been treasuring up

dust,
back
of inf
cancy
field,
woods
I have
thousa
slept w
the Al
mand!
I nev
of the
met De
a stupi
brutal
into the
rejoiced
thought
great tr
moned;

When
Nor t

It is th
else I cou
of the gl
breath, i
thought
after, the
recoil. Th
of mirth
as the id
start forth
demonstra
something
desired.

dust, and sporting myself with the wind. I look back on my past life, and, but for some memorials of infamy and guilt, it is all a blank, a perfect vacancy. I might have grazed with the beasts of the field, or sung with the winged inhabitants in the woods, to much better purpose than any for which I have lived : and, oh ! but for some faint hope, a thousand times more blessed had I been to have slept with the clods of the valley, and never heard the Almighty Fiat, nor waked into life at his command !

I never had a just apprehension of the solemnity of the part I am to act till now. I have often met Death insulting on the hostile plain, and with a stupid boast defied his terrors ; with a courage as brutal as that of the warlike horse I have rushed into the battle, laughed at the glittering spear, and rejoiced at the sound of the trumpet ; nor had a thought of any state beyond the grave, nor the great tribunal, to which I must have been summoned ;

Where all my secret guilt had been reveal'd,
Nor the minutest circumstance conceal'd.

It is this which arms death with all its terrors ; else I could still mock at Fear, and smile in the face of the gloomy Monarch. It is not giving up my breath, it is not being for ever insensible, is the thought at which I shrink ; it is the terrible *hereafter*, the something beyond the grave, at which I recoil. Those great realities, which in the hours of mirth and vanity I have treated as phantoms, as the idle dreams of superstitious brains, these start forth, and dare me now in their most terrible demonstration. My awakened conscience feels something of that eternal vengeance I have often defied.

To what heights of madness is it possible for human nature to reach? What extravagance is it to jest with death! to laugh at damnation! to sport with eternal chains, and recreate a jovial fancy with the scenes of infernal misery!

Were there no impiety in this kind of mirth, it would be as ill-bred as to entertain a dying friend with the sight of an Harlequin, or the rehearsal of a farce. Every thing in Nature seems to reproach this levity in human creatures: the whole creation but man is serious; man, who has the highest reason to be so, while he has affairs of infinite consequence depending on his short uncertain duration. A condemned wretch may with as good a grace go dancing to his execution as the greatest part of mankind go on with such a thoughtless gaiety to their graves.

Oh, my Philario! with what horror do I recall those hours of vanity we have wasted together! Return, ye lost neglected Moments! how should I prize you above the eastern treasures! Let me dwell with hermits; let me rest on the cold earth; let me converse in cottages; may I but once more stand a candidate for an immortal crown, and have my probation for celestial happiness.

Ye vain Grandeurs of a court! ye sounding Titles, and perishing Riches! what do ye now signify? what consolation, what relief, can ye give me?

I have had a splendid passage to the grave; I die in state, and languish under a gilded canopy; I am expiring on soft and downy pillows, and am respectfully attended by my servants and physicians: my dependents sigh, my sisters weep, my father bends beneath a load of years and grief; my lovely wife, pale and silent, conceals her inward anguish; my friend, the generous Pylades, who was as my own soul, suppresses his sighs, and leaves me to hide his secret grief.

But
at the
from t
dark p
Here
idle ce
haps m
only c
my Ju
bable,
corpse

But cou
ply;

Not

Whil
at my i
just conc
an uncr
ing inf
mercy, t
of lost
we meet

From CE

Too
hecc
tion have
which wil

But, oh! which of these will answer my summons at the high tribunal? which of them will bail me from the arrest of Death? who will descend into the dark prison of the grave for me?

Here they all leave me, after having paid a few idle ceremonies to the breathless clay; which perhaps may ly reposed in state, while my soul, my only conscious part, may stand trembling before my Judge. My afflicted friends, it is very probable, with great solemnity, will lay the senseless corpse in a stately monument, inscribed with,

Here lyes the Great—

But could the pale carcass speak, it would soon reply;

——false marble, where?

Nothing but poor and sordid dust lyes here.

Cowley.

While some flattering panegyric is pronounced at my interment, I may perhaps be hearing my just condemnation at a superior tribunal; where an unerring verdict may sentence me to everlasting infamy. But I cast myself on his absolute mercy, through the infinite merits of the Redeemer of lost mankind. Adieu, my dear Philario, till we meet in the world of spirits.

L E T T E R X.

From CELADON to AMASIA, who had seduced him into a criminal love for her.

TOO lovely Amasia! whither have you led my heedless steps? into what paths of destruction have you seduced me? I have done an action which will never bear the reflection of reason; an

action that will stamp an endless stain on my character, and with which my conscience loudly reproaches me.

I have sinned against all the ties of honour and gratitude. The generous man I have wronged was the guardian of my childhood, and the guide of my yet unexperienced youth. I am entering into the world under his conduct and protection; he has been more than a father to me. Never was a trust discharged with greater tenderness and fidelity; may Heaven return it in a thousand blessings on his head!—should he ever leave an orphan like me exposed, may it meet the same justice and humanity I have found from him; but, oh! may it never make such a return! Let such villany never stain his noble race, nor leave a blemish on his name!

These thoughts bring back to my memory all his gentle treatment, awake my young affections, and melt me into childish tears.—Oh, could they wash away my guilt, and restore me back to virtue!

————— Yet I'll look up.

My fault is past: but, oh! what form of prayer

Can serve my turn!

Shakespeare.

Curse on the maxims of the world, and that impropriety of language that would disguise the basest of crimes with the names of amusement and gallantry? Let me be singular, let me be unpollite, let me be unfashionably good, if I can but keep my peace, and justify myself to my own conscience! Let me inviolably observe the rules of Truth and Justice, be fearless and open to the inspection of God; and may everlasting reproach rest on all the modish appellations and refinements that would soften the horror of a base and treacherous action!

The
Altam
great
the rel
public
comm
that g
made y
which
from v
pervert
and in
with an
and you
cused.

'Till t
thought
your ch
sion led
I took i
ened int
poison,
and foot

What
ment, v
whom yo
all your
such a co
best temp
man, and
might just

But he
sand tend
dence in
temper, l
soul incap
artifice w

These were the principles in which the injured Altamont instructed me, and confirmed by his own great example. My mind had been elevated by the rehearsal of heroic actions, and a love to the public interest; by a philosophic fortitude, and the command of my passions. Such were the motives that governed me, till the fatal day came that made you a bride to the deluded Altamont; from which unhappy period I may date my apostasy from virtue. You taught me softer maxims, and perverted the noble ardour of my soul into loose and infamous designs; while you carested me with an open freedom, which my early years, and your husband's affection for me, too easily excused.

Till then I had been a stranger to love; and, thoughtless of danger, left myself unguarded to all your charms; ignorant whither the growing passion led, nor thought the pleasure criminal which I took in your conversation: but I was soon softened into sin, and unwarily took in the deadly poison, while you indulged the guilty inclination, and soothed me into ruin.

What infernal delusion perverted your judgment, when you preferred me to the man to whom you had given your vows? The vainest of all your sex might have limited her ambition with such a conquest. If the most agreeable person, the best temper, joined with unblemished equity to man, and piety to God, ever claimed esteem, he might justly challenge it from all that knew him.

But he had a right to your affection by a thousand tender engagements, and by his entire confidence in your fidelity; not from any credulity of temper, but from his own innate honour, and a soul incapable of treachery or distrust. With an artifice which only Hell could teach, you have se-

cured the esteem of a man who, in all things else, acts with the greatest judgment and penetration.

It was the disguise I saw you practise that recalled me back to truth and honour: in your crime I perceived my own guilt, and abhorred the monstrous part I had been acting. While he, my guardian, my protector, had been fatiguing himself with cares and journeys to secure me from wrongs and injustice, I, in his own house, proved a traitor to his honour, and invaded the most sacred rights of his affection.—Oh that he would appear to my view an enemy, a villain, any thing but a friend and benefactor! These titles confound and pierce my soul with the most exquisite torments.

The fever from which I am just recovered was not half so threatening to my life as the expressions of his kindness; when, with the tenderness of a father, and the benignity of a friend, he watched my languishing intervals, and discovered the most affectionate concern for my life. How exquisite was my remorse! Nothing but the dread of eternal vengeance could have kept me from putting an end to that life for which he showed such an unfeigned concern.

My crime stood in all its aggravations before me: the secret sense of my guilt was worse than death or infamy; I abhorred the disguise of virtue by which I deceived him: no consideration but his happiness could have restrained me from confessing my villany, and giving myself up to his just reproaches and vengeance. I could have smiled on Death, and welcomed the fatal stroke from his hand, could that have been an expiation for my guilt.

But I had my peace to make with Heaven, and found another sort of expiation necessary to secure me from divine vengeance; so that, as much as

I was
could
soon as
mined
country
for eve

No b
So m
The
And

I dar
well. Y
ter the
again k
ness fro
you can
conduct
the unh

My L

YOU
me
entering
in this
agreeabl
gracious
hero of r
meet no
without
nating th

I was tired with life, death was no refuge, nor could I fly to the grave as a sanctuary: yet, as soon as ever my health permits, I am fully determined to make myself an exile from my native country, and fly the sight of my injured friend for ever. But,

———where shall I find refuge?

No barb'rous nation will receive a guilt
So much transcending theirs, but drive me out!
The wildest beasts will hunt me from their dens,
And birds of prey molest me in the grave.

I dare not see you, Madam, to take a last farewell. You have beauty, and I am human; and, after these convictions, should the dangerous flame again kindle, I must sin away all hopes of forgiveness from God or man. Make what reparation you can to the best of husbands by your future conduct: it is the last advice you will receive from the unhappy

CELADON.

LETTER XI.

*To my Lord * * * from a statesman.*

My Lord,

YOUR commands are very obliging, in giving me an opportunity to be impertinent, by entering into a detail of my solitary amusements in this absolute retreat from all the polite and agreeable part of society. It is well I have your gracious indulgence to talk of myself, and be the hero of my own romance; for, without vanity, I meet nothing here more considerable; nor is it without justice that I claim the privilege of personating the superior part in the drama.

Indeed I was never more sensible of my own dignity; abstract from business or diversion, my mind retires within itself, where it finds treasures till now undiscovered, capacities formed for infinite objects, desires that stretch themselves beyond the limits of this wide creation in search of the great Original of life and pleasure. I find new powers exerting their energy, some latent exercises, which, till now, I have been a stranger to: I have indeed heard from the men who teach such holy fables, (as I then thought them), that the soul was immortal, and capable of celestial joys: but I rather wished than believed these transporting truths, and put them on a level with the poets' rosy bowers, their myrtle shades, and soft Elysian Fields; but now I am convinced of their evidence, and triumph in the privileges of my own being. I rejoice to think, that the moment I begun to exist I entered on an eternal state, and commenced a duration that shall run parallel to that of the supreme and self-existent Mind.

This prospect animates me with a divine ambition, and casts a reproach on all created glory: the world vanishes, its charms and soft allurements are no more; a veil is cast on mortal beauty, the spell is broken, the enchantment dissolved.

You smile, I know, and take this for an imaginary triumph, a sort of cowardly insult in the absence of an enemy. You will tell me this contempt of grandeur appears with an ill grace in one that has the possession of a splendid post in the government: but this, my Lord, is what has given me a just opinion of the world, and of myself. A constant series of success and prosperity has convinced me, that the whole creation cannot make me blessed. My ambitious designs have never been disappointed; in love, by a strange caprice of the

sex, I
pleasu
ceived
and so
Why
satisfy,
pines:
of evil
reflecti
ble? I
human
cannot
I have
there is
utmost
am cure
evidence
What
mise my
fia! The
lost my
impertin
put a pe
no longe
whom I
tation to
and dres
rious app
being. I
of any me
tion I hea
Cuzzoni o
to be dec
an implic
affirmed
the Begg
perate zea

sex, I have been always fortunate; but whatever pleasure I pursued, the enjoyment always undeceived or disgusted me. Sometimes I was too wise, and sometimes too capricious, to be pleased.

Why am I not at rest! why cannot these objects satisfy, or at least delude me with a dream of happiness? why must I so exactly balance the weight of evil that mingles with every good? Had I these reflecting powers to make me thus nicely miserable? I am reasoning away all the satisfaction of human life, and growing wise to desperation: I cannot so much as amuse myself with an airy hope; I have tried all the vanities below the sun, and there is no novelty left to flatter me; I know the utmost that Beauty and Greatness can give, and am cured of love and ambition by experimental evidence.

What a paradise, what lasting joys, did I promise myself in the possession of the admired Aspasia! The yielding beauty, by granting my desires, lost my esteem; her charms vanished, her wit was impertinence, and her artifice disgusted me. This put a period to my gallantries: the women were no longer angels, but mere erring mortals, with whom I conversed on a level, without any temptation to idolatry. Balls and assemblies, dancing and dress, were no longer the subjects of my serious application, nor the supreme design of my being. I no longer interested myself in the success of any modish entertainment; with great moderation I heard the grand controversy who sung best, Cuzzoni or Faustina; and I left the important truth to be decided by more capable judges. I yielded an implicit assent to every well-dressed critic, who affirmed Mrs — was the best actress of Polly in the Beggar's Opera; and never betrayed any intemperate zeal, or breach of charity, against those who

dissented. I knew every beau and fine lady in Great Britain had a right to judge for themselves; and that being too positive might endanger the public peace.

But these soft follies were only discarded for more specious vanities: distinction and power, titles and equipage, now employed my thoughts; ambition took full possession of my soul:—I reached the envied height, and made myself gloriously miserable. The period from whence I resolved to date my happiness begun with distrust and anxiety: instead of friends, I found myself surrounded with flatterers and mercenary dependents. Impatient, and fatigued with the crowd, I sometimes withdrew to my apartment, and in solitary grandeur tried what joys the contemplation on my quality and titles could give;—"The most Noble!—The right Honourable!"—"Ye potent Words!"—I cried, "where is your energy?"—"Ye mighty Sounds, that once fired my soul!"—"where is your accustomed force? have ye no pleasing magic to still the tempest within?"—"Ye boasted names of Trust and Power! why can ye no longer recreate my spirits, nor solace my moments of leisure and retirement? Is there nothing in the glittering coronet, this popular toy, to divert me? While I am surrounded with the pageantries of state, and see so many badges of my own dignity, why does not my mind elate itself, and brighten into ecstasy?" One would think it impossible to be splenetic with these fine panegyrics and elegant dedications lying before me. Here I find myself a hero, a wit, a handsome man, a virtuoso; and, to sum up all, an universal blessing to mankind. This darling theme, this catalogue of my own good qualities, one would imagine should gladden my heart, and give me some

vivaci
as the
ly hav
had no

My
to with
romant
riety o
their u
ed and
but the
tal bein
my own
spontan
painted
and the

I hav
madnet
wisdom
tion I t
mente
spired w
great Sp

Ye W
Thes
From
Let n
He sp
I hear
In Na
With
O gl
Flow
Forgiv
Thy w
The si
I haun

Volume

vivacity; and yet really, my Lord, as agreeable as the subject of my own merit is, it would hardly have kept me awake, if the vexations of state had not done it.

My late indisposition has given me a just excuse to withdraw from public affairs. I have found a romantic retreat, surrounded with a charming variety of woods, open lawns, and flowery vales, in their uncultivated beauty: here I rove unattended and free, with no circumstance of grandeur, but the consciousness of a reasonable and immortal being: I have the joy to find I can stand on my own legs, and move from place to place with a spontaneous motion, without the assistance of a painted machine, the prudence of my coachman, and the vigour of my horses.

I have tried what delights were to be found in madness and folly, and am now in pursuit of what wisdom and philosophy can yield. In the fair creation I trace an Almighty Power, and see the immense Divinity impressed on all his works. Inspired with a charming enthusiasm, I address the great Spirit of Nature in these soliloquies:

Ye Woods and Wilds, receive me to your shade!

These still retreats my contemplation aid:

From mortals flying to your chaste abode,

Let me attend th' instructive voice of God!

He speaks in all, and is in all things found;

I hear him, I perceive him all around;

In Nature's lovely and unblemish'd face,

With joy, his sacred lineaments I trace.

O glorious Being! O supremely Fair!

How free, how perfect, thy productions are!

Forgive me, while, with curious eyes, I view

Thy works, and boldly thus thy steps pursue:

The silent valley, and the lonely grove,

I haunt, but, oh! 'tis thee I seek and love:

'Tis not the chant of birds, nor whisp'ring breeze,
 But thy soft voice, I seek among the trees:
 Invoking thee, by silver streams I walk,
 To thee in solitary shades I talk:
 I speak thy dear lov'd name, nor speak in vain;
 Kind Echoes long the pleasing sound retain.
 Reviving sweets the op'ning flow'rs disclose,
 Fragrant the violet and the budding rose;
 But all their balmy sweets from thee they steal,
 And something of thee to my sense reveal.
 Fair looks the stars, and fair the morning ray,
 When first the fields their painted scenes display;
 Glorious the sun in his meridian height!
 And yet, compar'd to thee, how faint the light!
 Ador'd Artificer! what skill divine!
 What wonders in the wide creation shine!
 Order and majesty adorn the whole,
 Beauty and life, and thou th' inspiring Soul:
 Whatever grace or harmony's express'd
 On all thy works, the God is there confess'd:
 But, oh! from all thy works how small a part
 To human minds is known of what thou art!
 Fancy gives o'er its flight in search of thee,
 Our thoughts are lost in thy immensity.

The thoughts are my own, but I am modest
 enough to confess the cadence and rhyme are bor-
 rowed; and, as you are a patron of the Muses, I
 believed the harmony would please you: but you
 are certainly overjoyed to find the rapture is fi-
 nished; and that, after this elevation, I am com-
 posed enough to subscribe myself,

Your Lordship's
 most devoted
 humble servant,

PHILANDER.

To My
 count

My
 THE

me long
 this the

I can
 a bread
 can I de
 der story

You v
 versed in
 such ind
 but it i
 raille
 and depo

Nor w
 my conq
 ed in pub
 I did not
 version m
 prise: bu
 conspired

The ev
 excellent
 walk, and
 composed

These a
 The sce
 Ecstati
 Convers

L E T T E R XII.

To MYRTILLO, from a physician, giving him an account of his falling in love with a fair stranger.

My dear Myrtillo,

THE engagement I am under to attend the Earl of ——— in his illness, will detain me longer in the country than I designed; nor is this the only motive that has kept me here.

I can conceal nothing of importance without a breach of that confidence I have in you; nor can I deny myself the pleasure of telling the tender story of my care.

You will be surpris'd, that the person who conversed in the Mall, the Playhouse, and Opera, with such indifference, should turn lover in the country; but it is a serious truth, and will not admit of raillery: all my earthly happiness is in suspense, and depends on the success of this passion.

Nor will you censure me, when I tell you that my conqueror is the lovely Stranger that appeared in public last winter with the Duchess of ———. I did not see her then; and if I had, business or diversion might have guarded me from the soft surprise: but all nature, every alluring circumstance, conspired here to vanquish and enchant me.

The evening was fair, and, with Mr Thomson's excellent poem on Summer in my hand, I took a walk, and read by intervals, till all my soul was compos'd and harmonious.

These are the haunts of Meditation, these
The scenes where ancient Bards th'inspiring breath
Ecstatic felt; and from the world retir'd,
Convers'd with angels and immortal forms,

On heav'nly errand bent—to save the fall
Of Virtue struggling on the brink of Vice,
To hint pure thoughts, and warn the favour'd soul,
For future trials fated to prepare.

In this visionary temper I had wandered about a mile from the Earl of ——'s gardens and park, till I entered a winding valley, green and flowery as the Elysian Fields; a silver stream ran murmuring along the middle, and willows, in equal order, adorned the banks: it was not perfect nature, something of art appeared, but in the most agreeable negligence. There were many little mossy seats raised along the sides of the river; but what pleased me most was a grotto, which looked like the retirement of some Sylvan deity: I entered and lost myself in a pleasing contemplation, till the sight of the most charming object I ever beheld surprised me. She seemed

Fairer than fam'd of old, or fabled race
Of Fairy damsels, met in forest wide
By errant knights——

Milton.

Her shape and features were perfectly regular; her complexion clear as the light.——But I might as well paint Virtue or Harmony as describe the graces of her mein and aspect; in which there was nothing of that gay and thoughtless vivacity that most of her sex think so becoming; but something so serious and composed, something that expressed a mind within conscious of its own dignity and heavenly original. She advanced till she came near the arbour that concealed me, and then, seating herself on the bank of the river, in a pensive posture, leaning her cheek on her hand, white as the new-fallen snow, with a soft and graceful accent she repeated the following lines out of Sir Richard Blackmore's fine poem on the Creation.

Th
Br
So
No
We
Th
Wh

I he
there
delicat
perhap
While
to tell
ed for
man at
curiosit
end of
of build
grew d
and, re
writing
sequel i
But I
and in

To th

M
I
nished, a
in this w

Thy force alone, Religion, Death disarms,
 Breaks all his darts, and ev'ry viper charms ;
 Soften'd by thee the grisly Form appears
 No more the horrid object of our fears.
 We, undismay'd, this awful Pow'r obey,
 That guides us through the safe, though gloomy, way
 Which leads to life——

I heard her with a very tender concern, because there appeared something in her complexion too delicate for a state of confirmed health, which was, perhaps, what led her to such a serious thought. While she was going on, a spruce footman came to tell her supper was ready, and her father waited for her: she rose immediately, and followed the man at some distance. When they were gone, my curiosity ventured some paces forward, and at the end of the walk I perceived a pretty romantic pile of building where she entered. But the evening grew dusky, and I hastened back to the Earl's seat, and, retiring to my apartment, passed my time in writing this adventure, of which you shall hear the sequel in my next.

But I am grown a lover in one fatal moment, and in this deplorable circumstance am

Your devoted humble servant,

LEANDER.

L E T T E R XIII.

To the same, relating the death of his Mistress.

MY last informed you in what a serious passion I was engaged; but the tragedy is now finished, and I am past the possibility of being happy in this world.

A few days after my last adventure there came a message from a neighbouring gentleman for me to attend one of the family who was ill; I followed the servant, and found, to my surprise, it was the house where all my hopes were confined. I was immediately conducted to the apartment of my patient, who proved the lovely woman I had seen in my last ramble; she was sitting in a chair, pale and negligent, but perfectly graceful in the height of her disorder.

No words can express my grief when I found the symptoms of her distemper fatal: indeed the distraction of my mind was so remarkable that she could not but observe it; and perceiving her own danger in my concern, she asked me, without the least emotion, "if I was surprised to find her mortal?" but she desired me, "since it was a truth of which she was entirely convinced, to speak my opinion without the least flattery or caution."

This true greatness of mind confirmed my esteem, and heightened my concern for her life: but I was in the last exigence what to reply. I durst not flatter her in the common strain of my profession, nor could I imitate that insensibility which the young heroine acted in an event on which the future happiness of my life depended.

I was ashamed to weep; but while sorrow kept me silent the dying beauty told me, some intervals of disorder she lately felt had made the darkness of the grave, and the solemnity of a deathbed, familiar scenes to her imagination. "Waiting for my last hour," added she, "without consternation, I find this mortal structure sinking into the dust; but methinks I find the nobler powers of my soul kindling into life and immortality."

What
compare
could ha
fired the
not to g
lay as if
hastily c
a few ho
fort of la
ing beyo

Thefe
a faint b
shall nev

"O I
"rors,
"me!
"hast t
"fenger
"gentle

When
Meet
Oh, r
The d
Come,
Come,

"I fe
"light,
"the fl
"ing th
"ments
"dazzli
"behol
"compl
"I fee
"prefer
"are pl

What are the laurels and trophies of conquerors compared to this scene of triumph, which now I could have envied? But my charming patient desired she might try to rest, and I retired, resolving not to go from the house till I saw the event. She lay as if she slept till the morning, when I was hastily called, and found her past all hopes, but of a few hours life: her senses were perfect, and a sort of languishing beauty adorned her face, charming beyond all the vivacity of health.

These were some of her last words, uttered with a faint but pleasing accent, the sound of which I shall never forget.

“ O Death! how hast thou disguised thy terrors, and put on an angel’s form to approach me! What welcome, what transporting, tidings hast thou brought me! I come, thou kind messenger of my liberty and happiness; I obey thy gentle invitation.”

When shall the curtain fall, and these bless’d eyes

Meet all the dazzling wonders of the skies?

Oh, rend the hated veil, and take away

The dull partition of this brittle clay!

Come, heav’nly day, which ne’er shall see a cloud!

Come, cheering smiles, from the bright face of God.

“ I see, methinks, the glimmering of celestial light, and bless the dawning of everlasting day; the shadows are flying, and the heavens opening their inmost glories before me: in a few moments I shall enter the blissful habitations, the dazzling recesses, of the Most High, whom I shall behold in full perfection, exalted in Majesty, and complete in Beauty: my hopes are unbounded, I see no limits to my expectations; for in his presence is fulness of joy, and at his right hand are pleasures for evermore.

" With these transporting scenes before me, what
 " glorious mortal could excite my envy? what
 " scene of pleasure could the whole creation dis-
 " play to tempt me back? The dark dominions
 " of Death I am passing through, not a captive,
 " but a conqueror, through the strength of my
 " victorious Redeemer, who has led in triumph
 " all the powers of Darkness. Millions of ages of
 " happiness are before me; the prospect stretches
 " to an unmeasurable length; my soul presses for-
 " ward, and calls Eternity itself her own."

At these words, closing her eyes, with a smile
 she resigned her breath, and left me,

Your most unhappy Friend,

LEANDER.

LETTER XIV.

*From MYRTILLA to HERMIONE, giving an ac-
 count of the fatal event of her brother's passion for her.*

My dear Hermione,

I HOPE my last letter prepared you for the me-
 lancholy tidings which this brings you of my
 brother's death. I know the relation will heighten
 your grief and renew my own sorrow; but reason
 signifies nothing, and proves but an empty name,
 in the transport of such a tender passion as now
 possesses all my soul.

After the fatal time that my father had extorted
 a promise from my brother, and charged him on
 his blessing never to see you more, I perceived an
 alteration in the gaiety of his temper, with a vi-
 sible decay of his health; but I could hardly per-

suade
 soft pa
 verted

I wa
 submissi
 in this
 could I
 such a r
 no objec

Howe
 ther's go
 plausible
 cut off
 happiness
 ments,
 dispose o

But a
 passion f
 inward a
 day befo
 it till his

My fa
 expiring
 cret whi
 regret to
 cern, an
 by ownin
 actions,
 knowledge
 put on f
 observed
 still add

" Be fa
 youth, "
 " Heaven
 " gloriou
 Then,

suade myself love was the cause, imagining the soft passion in a youth of eighteen was easily diverted from one fair object to another.

I was confirmed in this by his obliging and submissive behaviour to my father, whose conduct in this affair was indeed arbitrary and severe; nor could I forbear making some secret reproaches on such a rigorous imposition, where there could be no objection made but to your fortune.

However, filial affection was certainly my brother's governing principle, and he still found some plausible excuses for that severe command, which cut off the brightest hopes he had of any earthly happiness. His piety always silenced my resentments, and pleaded my father's absolute right to dispose of him.

But as much as he endeavoured to disguise his passion for me, the inclosed will convince you of the inward anguish of his mind, which he gave me the day before he died, and charged me not to read it till his eyes were closed in death.

My father, in the utmost distress, looked on the expiring youth, but durst not examine into a secret which would have given him the extremest regret to discover. My brother perceived his concern, and gave him all the consolation he could, by owning his paternal care of his principles and actions, and returned him the most pathetic acknowledgments for the restraints his authority had put on some of his youthful follies. My father observed the kind intention of this discourse, which still added to the anguish of his soul.

"Be satisfied, my dear Father," said the dying youth, "be satisfied with the determinations of Heaven: I might have dragged out a long inglorious life, loaded with infamy and guilt."

Then, taking me by the hand, with a heavenly

smile on his face, he said, "Adieu, my dear Sister;
 " I am rather falling into a gentle sleep than dy-
 " ing: I feel no pain, and all within is peaceful
 " and calm." And then closing his eyes, with a
 soft voice he repeated these words, and with them
 resigned his breath:

The angels call, they call me from above,
 And bid me hasten to th' realms of Love:
 My soul with transport hears the happy doom;
 I come, ye gentle Messengers, I come!
 Earth flies with all the charms it has in store,
 Its snares and gay temptations are no more.
 While heav'n appears, and the propitious skies
 Unveil their inmost glories to my eyes,
 To mortals and their hopes I bid adieu,
 And ask no more the rising sun to view;
 For, oh! the Light himself, with rays divine,
 Breaks in, and God's eternal day is mine.

After this moving story, whether I ought in
 prudence to let you see the inclosed I cannot de-
 termine; but it is not in my power to keep it a
 secret from my most faithful friend. It will show
 my brother's height of virtue in commanding a
 passion so tender and fatal.

I am unalterably your's,
 MYRTILLA.

This is the letter he gave me sealed the day
 before he died, with a charge not to open it till
 after he was dead.

TO MYRTILLA.

" My dear Sister,

" **W**HATEVER care I have taken hitherto to
 " conceal my folly, I now confess it, that
 " the fatal effect may warn you from giving up

" you
 " pass
 " tiny
 " M
 " an e
 " and
 " prov
 " coun
 " in m
 " the i
 " ved,
 " sign
 " till m
 " vour
 " I was
 " and h
 " vanta
 " tion
 " W
 " natio
 " the ti
 " I pai
 " witne
 " the u
 " by a
 " son, b
 " is nov
 " main
 " of my
 " and f
 " tion o
 " sure;
 " that i
 " voice
 " and u
 " Adi
 " Sister!

“ yourself to the government of an immoderate
“ passion. It was this that hastened my early des-
“ tiny, and cut off all the noble ends of my life.

“ My love to the beautiful Hermione was such
“ an enchantment, that all the motives of Reason
“ and Religion could not free me from it. The im-
“ provements of art and nature, the love of my
“ country, and the public welfare, had no share
“ in my thoughts : my piety was enervated, and
“ the important end of my being neglected. I li-
“ ved, and moved, and acted, with no other de-
“ sign but to please the caprice of my fair tyrant ;
“ till my father, with the highest reason, endea-
“ voured to rescue me from the inglorious slavery.
“ I was convinced of the kindness of his intention,
“ and how much he consulted my honour and ad-
“ vantage in putting me under a solemn obliga-
“ tion never to see the object of my dotage more.

“ With the utmost violence to my tender incli-
“ nation I kept my promise, and sell a victim to
“ the ties of filial piety and truth. What regard
“ I paid to those sacred names Heaven was my
“ witness, and how sincerely I strove to conquer
“ the unhappy passion that possessed me. Aided
“ by a Power divine, I at last recovered my rea-
“ son, but my health hourly declined, and Death
“ is now advancing to release me from all the re-
“ mainders of error and folly. The soft affections
“ of my soul will be perfectly refined into a noble
“ and seraphic ardour : I am going to the frui-
“ tion of immortal beauty and unmingled plea-
“ sure ; I shall gaze on the bright Original of all
“ that is excellent and lovely ; I shall hear the
“ voice of uncreated Harmony, speaking peace
“ and unutterable ecstasy to my soul.

“ Adieu, my dear Myrtilla, my much-loved
“ Sister ! May angels watch your steps, and keep

“ you in the paths of Virtue! Make it your study
 “ to soften my father’s cares, and add no sorrow
 “ to his hoary age. I fear he will carry his grief
 “ for me to the grave; but, oh! let him never
 “ know the excess of my folly. I charge you not
 “ to show him a word of this letter, nor once re-
 “ flect on his well-meant severity. Farewell, till
 “ we meet in the blissful realms of Love.”

L E T T E R XV.

To Mr * * * * *

S I R,

THE instances of Heathen virtue that you have collected have something in them, I confess, noble and surprising; and your eloquence has set them in their full lustre and magnitude: but there is a name, the Christian boast and hope, that darkens all human glory, and which, with a sort of pious insult, may be opposed to the most accomplished of your heroes.

The poem I have inclosed on this lofty subject is a paraphrase on Mr Crashaw’s *Hymn to the name of Jesus*, and there is little alteration of any thing but the language.

A HYMN TO THE NAME OF JESUS.

A WAKE, my Soul! my Glory, rise and sing!
 Awake, and all thy sacred ardour bring!
 While for unusual flight I spread a tow’ring wing:
 Awake, my Lute! proud of thy glorious theme,
 Let each harmonious string
 Tremble with rapt’rous joy, and speak the mighty
 Name!

Assist me, ev'ry gentle Sound,
Which studious Art has found;
You that speak with silver strings,
Or swell with tuneful breath,
And lend the coward wings
To meet the face of Death:
You that in the rural strain
Echo through the peaceful plain,
Delight the groves, and charm the guiltless swain;
With you that various joys afford,
Touch'd by a skilful hand,
Which can the pow'rs of Harmony command,
And dance, with graceful art, along the tuneful
You that with vocal music please the ear, [chord.
Your choicest strains prepare:
The springs which move our inmost thoughts you
And can their fiercest rage controul, [know,
While from your lips torrents of pleasures flow,
And overwhelm the soul.
Let all that Nature graceful calls, or sweet,
In the glorious concert meet!
Purling streams, and falling floods,
Sighing winds, and whisp'ring woods!
Let ev'ry bird of tuneful throat
Join his free ungovern'd note;
While hills and vallies catch the sacred strain,
And everlasting echoes the blest'd sound retain!
With Jesus we begin, his charming name
shall fill the spacious song,
And yield an endless theme.
To ev'ry note the joyful word we'll place,
Our soft preludiums this alone shall grace,
And ev'ry cadence artfully prolong.
New smiles already Nature wears,
All blooming looks, and gay;
The brighten'd sun, crown'd with fresh beams,
And darts a clearer ray. [appears,

Transporting Name!

Whose accents to the ransom'd world proclaim
 Salvation, and immeasurable grace,
 Peace and good-will to all the human race;
 A purchas'd heav'n, and open paradise,
 Unbounded joys, and never-ending bliss.
 Stupendous love!

Can man for this ungrateful prove?
 Jesus, the Saviour! what rebellious knee
 Would not a ready homage pay to thee?
 The martyrs, glorious train!

The noble votaries of old,
 In records of immortal Fame enroll'd,
 Wore on their breasts inscrib'd thy mighty name
 By this, with sacred Fortitude inspir'd,
 With heav'nly zeal and transport fir'd,
 They ran upon the pointed spear,
 And leap'd into the flame;
 Nor Death could in a shape appear,
 But what, with open arms, they met,
 Despising all that rage could do, or proudest ty-
 rants threat.

Not Hell itself their constancy could shake,
 Its deepest stratagems they brake,
 Its wildest fury trampled down, [crown
 And seiz'd, with conqu'ring hands, the everlasting
 Jesus the signal for the fight they chose,
 And gave a glorious onset to their foes;
 In vain the pow'rs of Earth and Hell oppos'd:
 Jesus, our conqu'ring Chief! they cry'd;
 Jesus! aloud the sounding skies reply'd.
 Exalted Name!

From thee the burning seraphs catch their flame
 Jesus, the God! 'tis they alone can tell
 What treasures in that title dwell.
 You happy Spirits, that feel its emphasis,
 By this you stand confirm'd in bliss,

And know what boundless joys are stor'd
In this important word.

The glorious subject only suits
The high-strain'd notes of your immortal lutes.

Then join the choir,

You bright Musicians of the skies,
And, with a well-proportion'd fire,
Instruct us how to rise.

Let your bless'd harps th' imperfect lay prolong,
Complete the bold design, and close th' advent'rous
song.

L E T T E R XVI.

Lady JANE GRAY to Lord GUILFORD DUDLEY.

WITH anguish that no force of words can tell,
In these sad lines I take my last farewell:
Could I with less reluctance part from thee,
Approaching death had no surprise for me;
That solemn prospect should my thoughts employ,
And banish ev'ry tender scene of joy;
But thou dost still return upon my soul;

What force the soft temptation can controul?
I meet thee still resistless in thy charms,
High on thy breast, and languish in thy arms.

Oh, Guilford! 'tis no wretched love of life
That fills my thoughts with this uneasy strife,
The flatter'ing blandishments of youthful years,
& promis'd kingdom, nor my country's tears;
For thee alone I'd live, for thee alone
I seek the fatal proffer of a crown.

No fond ambition stain'd my quivering mind,
Nur'd with passions of a gentler kind;
Were thee I would have choic'd some calmer scene,
Far from the dull formalities of state;

How careless, how serene, my fleeting hours
 Had pass'd in shady walks and fragrant bow'rs,
 Pleas'd with the murmurs of a smooth cascade,
 Or near some crystal fountain, while it play'd,
 Upon its flow'ry verge with thee reclin'd,
 My voice I to the melting lute had join'd,
 And sooth'd thy soul with gentle strains of love,
 Answer'd by all the music of the grove.

Where rove my thoughts?—Assist me, Grace di-
 This last, this darling, object to resign! [vine,
 Forgive this frailty of my tender years,
 This guilty fondness, and these female tears.
 Yet Heav'n my witness stands, I would not buy
 Ev'n Guilford's life with one inglorious lie;
 Nor dare my tongue, for all these ample skies
 Contain, the form of sacred truth disguise.
 Be Rome, be Hell, in their revengeful pride,
 Their flames, their racks, and tort'ring arts, defy'd!
 A thousand glorious witnesses have stood
 For this great cause, and seal'd it with their blood.
 Thou conqu'ring Leader of a shining train
 Of martyrs, for thy testimony slain!
 In thy victorious Name I dare engage
 The utmost force of persecuting rage:
 To men, to angels, be my soul unveil'd,
 Nor any part of heav'nly truth conceal'd!
 The glorious cause that animates my breast,
 My lips, with holy triumph shall attest;
 Attest it with my last expiring breath,
 And smile on all the solemn pomp of Death.

But darker scenes before my fancy rise,
 And nature, vanquish'd, sinks in the surprise:
 To shake my utmost virtue, 'tis decreed
 That thou to Rome must first a victim bleed.
 How shall thy wretched wife that stroke survive!
 An hour beyond will be an age to live.
 But, Guilford, keep thy sacred truth unstain'd,
 And half my immortality is gain'd.

Ye
 From
 That
 And l
 To an
 Appea
 Show
 For fu
 Open
 Your g
 Where
 And sp
 With
 And c

Lord G

M A
 M
 For the
 And wa
 Were I
 I'd call
 These p
 From al
 Sink, c
 And wi
 Were I
 What to
 Inglori
 The fil
 Why
 Our mis

Ye virgin Saints, that, in your early bloom,
From cruel tyrants met a fatal doom,
That died the honour of the Christian faith,
And boldly trod the same illustrious path!
To animate the youthful suff'rer's breast,
Appear, in all your heav'nly glories dress'd;
Show him your sparkling crowns, the bright reward
For such distinguish'd constancy prepar'd;
Open your rosy bow'rs, your blissful seats,
Your gardens of delight, and soft retreats,
Where gentle gales ambrosial odours blow,
And springs of joy in endless currents flow;
With smiling visions recreate his soul,
And ev'ry doubting, anxious, thought controul.

L E T T E R. XVII.

Lord GUILFORD DUDLEY to Lady JANE GRAY.

MAY ev'ry watchful angel guard thy life!
My lovely Princess, and my charming Wife!
For thee I importune the Skies with pray'rs,
And waste the tedious hours in gloomy cares.
Were I from all the world but thee confin'd,
I'd call my stars propitious still, and kind;
These prison walls would prove a safe retreat
From all the restless factions of the great.
Sink, curs'd Ambition, to thy native hell,
And with thy kindred fiends for ever dwell!
Were I, my Fair, again possess'd of thee,
What toys were kingdoms and their crowns to me?
Inglorious in some blissful shades I'd prove
The silent joys of unmolested Love.

Why was thy birth deriv'd from ancient kings?
Our mis'ry from this fatal greatness springs:

Indulgent Love a gentler lot design'd,
 Nor form'd for public cares thy guiltless mind;
 Thy thoughts were all employ'd on softer themes,
 Tender and innocent as infants' dreams:
 And yet—but Heav'n that title disallows,
 A crown, methought, look'd glorious on thy brows,
 In ev'ry look, in all thy graceful mien,
 The brightest rays of Majesty were seen:
 Imperial Beauty sparkled in thy eyes;
 I gaz'd with ecstasy and new surprise;
 A thousand times I press'd thy lovely hand,
 And cry'd, "'Twas form'd a sceptre to command."

But these gay scenes for ever take their flight,
 Like some fantastic vision of the night.

O! could my death the angry Queen appease,
 Could that alone a raging faction please,
 Unterrify'd I'd meet the public storm,
 And challenge Death in ev'ry dreadful form.
 But, oh! what horrors rise!—thy tender life!—
 What would I speak? my lov'd, my beauteous Wife!
 What counsel can thy wretched husband give?
 On any terms I fain would have thee live.
 Forgive my stagg'ring faith, my coward heart,
 My better thoughts disclaim this shameful part.
 What course can my distracting passions take,
 When thou, when truth, when heav'n itself's, at
 stake?

'To endless darkness would I drag thee down,
 And poorly rob thee of a martyr's crown?
 May Heav'n forbid!—I'll be thy joyful guide,
 Nor shall the fatal stroke our souls divide.

O Death! where is thy boasted conquest now?
 Where are the frowns and terrors of thy brow?
 Thou hast an angel's heav'nly form and air,
 Pleasures and Graces in thy train appear:
 Ten thousand kind transporting scenes arise;
 Oh, come, my Fair! they call us to the skies.

Beau
 Unda
 With
 The l

T

Mad

I CAN
 gel;
 you or
 certain
 never b
 sign but
 a savage
 time reg
 metamo
 However
 king you
 have ma
 glorious
 senses, th
 wits: m
 that you

For inv
 And fan

You ha
 an empty
 I see, I ad
 sults my i
 tes of her

Beauties, like thee, in Nature's early pride,
 Undaunted, for their sacred faith have died;
 With their, with all th' illustrious names of old,
 The British glory, thine shall be inroll'd.

L E T T E R XVIII.

To Mrs * * * * *

Madam,

I CANNOT say you have turned me into an angel; I have too much modesty to compliment you or myself with such miracles; but you have certainly given an elevation to my mind which I never before experienced: and, without any design but doing you justice, I may own that, from a savage I am become human, and from a libertine regular and consistent; from a lover you have metamorphosed me into a reasonable creature. However odd this confession appears, this is making you a greater compliment than swearing you have made me a lunatic and a madman. It is more glorious for you to be valued by a man in his right senses, than to be stared at by one quite out of his wits: my being more reasonable does not argue that you are less amiable.

For inward greatness, unaffected wisdom,
 And sanctity of manners, improve your charms.

Addison.

You have convinced me that Virtue is more than an empty name, that it is the most sacred reality. I see, I acknowledge, the bright Divinity: *see* insults my infidelity by a thousand modern instances of her power; among the youthful and mature,

the gentle and severe, *she* boasts her votaries : *Vir-
tue* retires no more to cottages and cells, but, se-
cure of public triumph and applause, *she* makes the
British court *her* imperial residence.

The Goddess all her glorious self appears,
When Carolina's royal form she wears.
With ev'ry conqu'ring charm she stands reveal'd,
While subject hearts their glad allegiance yield.

Long may this propitious Queen be the joy and
boast of a great and happy nation ! You find I am
grown public-spirited ; it is you have given this
generous ardour to my soul, and kindled the sin-
cerest zeal for the honour of my king and coun-
try I grow impatient to draw my sword in their
defence, and would commence the hero : nor will
I dissemble the truth, but freely own to you that,
in my state of infidelity, my bravery was all affect-
ed, and often disguised the most slavish terrors.

I perceive, Madam, it is my own panegyric I am
writing rather than your's. Indeed, my character
cannot be in better hands ; I have certainly done
myself justice, and been punctual in the recital of
my good qualities, and, with great modesty, have
thought fit to propose myself as an example of the
reformation of manners.

You will conclude I am in a disposition to write
a moral essay rather than a love-letter, which was
really my prime intention ; but you have ridicu-
led all my figures of rhetoric on that subject, so
that I am forced to change my style in my own de-
fence ; but I hope I am intelligible in assuring you
I am, without reserve, Madam,

Your most devoted,
and most humble servant,

ALBANUS.

LE

Madam

IT is c
the f
in some
such per
quillity,
But I m
country
plation,
mit's life
are divi
but a m
charms
To be co
kind are
appeara
of virtuo
victions
know th

Sweet
Howe
Tots'
Pale,
Our c
And a
If bri
Trust

Nothi
nation t

LETTERS TO CLEORA.

L E T T E R I.

Madam,

IT is certainly better for yourself, and more for the security of mankind, that you should live in some rural abode than appear in the world; such persons as you are fatal to the public tranquillity, and do mischief without ever designing it. But I must own, when Belles and Beaus retire to country shades for the sake of heavenly contemplation, the world will be well reformed. A hermit's life might be tolerable while the serious hours are divided between Hyde Park and the Opera; but a more distant retreat, in the full pride of your charms and youth, would be very extraordinary. To be convinced, by so early experience, that mankind are amused only with dreams and fantastic appearances, must proceed from a superior degree of virtue and good sense. After a thousand convictions of the vanity of their pursuits, how few know the emphasis of these few lines!

Sweet Solitude ! when Life's gay hours are past ;
Howe'er we range, in thee we fix at last :
Toss'd through tempestuous seas, (the voyage o'er)
Pale, we look back, and bless the friendly shore.
Our own strict judges our past life we scan,
And ask if Virtue has enlarg'd the span :
If bright the prospect, we the grave defy,
Trust future ages, and contented die.

Tickell.

Nothing is, perhaps, more terrible to the imagination than an absolute solitude ; yet, I must own,

such a retreat as disengages the mind from those interests and passions which mankind generally pursue appears to me the most certain way to happiness: quietly to withdraw from the crowd, and leave the gay and ambitious to divide the honours and pleasures of the world, without being a rival or competitor in any of these advantages, must leave a person in perfect and unenvied repose.

Without any apology, I am going to talk to myself; and what follows may be properly called a digression.

Let me lose the remembrance of this busy world, and hear no more of its distracting tumults! Ye vain Grandeurs of the earth! ye perishing Riches and fantastic Pleasures! what are your proudest boasts? Can you yield undecaying delights, joys becoming the dignity of reason, and the capacities of an immortal mind? Ask the happy spirits above at what price they value their enjoyments; ask them if the whole creation should purchase one moment's interval of their bliss? No:—one beam of celestial light obscures the glory, and casts a reproach on all the beauty this world can boast.

This is talking in buskins, you will think; and, indeed, I may resign crowns and sceptres, and give up the grandeurs of the world, with as much imaginary triumph as a hero might fight battles, and conquer armies, in a dream.

In the height of this romantic insult, I am,

Madam,

Your most obliged humble servant.

Madam
I AM
your
obscurit
Town, a
prehensi
for me,
order to
am in a
ertainm
had bee
paper yo
licious,
the fight
How ma
and not
by over
make mo
next. I
reason, i
though n
velty, it
that. I a
epistle th

L E T T E R II.

To the same.

Madam,

I AM certainly dead and buried, according to your notions of life; interred in the silence and obscurity of a country retreat, far from the dear Town, and all its joys; which, in your gay apprehensions, cannot properly be called *living*. But, for me, (who ask nothing but ease and liberty in order to be happy), I am willing to inform you I am in a state of existence, and capable of the entertainment your wit would have given me if you had been so obliging as to have filled the blank paper you sent: nothing could be more nicely malicious, nor is it possible for you to imagine how the sight of so much clean paper tormented me. How many sparkling things could you have writ, and not exhausted your stock, nor got the vapours by overstudying yourself! But I hope you will make me some reparation by the length of your next. I will not insist on your writing sense or reason, if that will be any privilege to you: but, though nonsense from you would be a great novelty, it would cost you so much pains to write it, that, I am afraid, you would send me a shorter epistle than your last.

I am,

Madam,

Your most obedient, &c.

LETTER III.

To the same.

I HAVE neglected writing so long that I am almost ashamed to own I am still alive: I ought to have died in pure civility, which would have been the only sufficient excuse for my silence. But, really, Madam, it costs me more pains to indite an epistle to you than it would to write a book to some sort of readers; and I cannot help wishing I had more wit, or you a great deal less.

Your prohibition of Lilliput paper will drive me to great extremities; and, what I most fear, will often prove a severe exercise to the patience of my gentle reader. I am reduced to a necessity of talking of this world or the next: for the *next*, you are so happy at present, that you may not be always disposed to think of so solemn a subject; and for *this*, I am entirely ignorant: my conversation is confined to whispering trees and murmuring brooks, and I cannot give you the least intelligence of what passes among mortals.

My fate, Madam, is just the reverse of your's. You had a great many things in your head, but wanted paper; I have clean paper enough, but nothing at all in my head: it is a vacuum, a dismal emptiness; and, unless I fill the blank paper with a curious flourish of a true lover's knot, I must subscribe,

Madam,

Your most obliged humble servant,

Madam

THE
tiff
in those
find all t
in your
my imag
scenes:
you are
as many
fore the
take fifty
and act
pride of
at all of
manner o
are limite

I am g
that you
with as n
mon, and
you seem
the bright
a reasona
sort of rel
am pretty
half-witte
tion deat
ten thous
did not b

Volume

L E T T E R I V.

To the same.

Madam,

THE Sylvan scenes never appeared more beautiful (not even in Mr Pope's Pastorals) than in those soft lines you inclosed. I hope you will find all the joys that Peace and Innocence can give in your charming retreat. Your description has led my imagination through a thousand enchanting scenes: I wish you may long enjoy those fine walks you are contriving; not that I wish you may see as many returning springs as the fair damsels before the deluge, when an insulting beauty might take fifty years' deliberation to answer a billet-doux, and act the tyrant five hundred years in the full pride of her charms. But you show no ambition at all of this nature; and I am persuaded it is no manner of mortification to you that your conquests are limited to a shorter date.

I am going, Madam, to put you in mind again that you are mortal. I fancy you open my letters with as much gravity as you would a funeral sermon, and read them with the same seriousness; but you seem pleased with these subjects; and, amidst the brightest advantages of youth and fortune, are a reasonable creature as well as a fine lady. These sort of reflections from me are not the vapours; I am pretty free from the spleen, as you know all half-witted people are; but in the gayest disposition death would have a dismal view, and wear ten thousand horrors, if an immortality beyond it did not brighten the scene.

Without this prospect it would not be worth the while to begin a generous friendship. When we have seen a few more setting suns, (for rising suns some people never see), when a few more flying hours are past, with life to resign the most exalted of human satisfactions would heighten all the horrors of the grave.

I might with less trouble recommend some good book to your perusal, and keep this divinity for my own use. You will be overjoyed that I am come to a conclusion, and am,

Madam,

Your's, &c.

L E T T E R V.

To the same.

Madam,

YOUR reflections on ——'s death have something in them so just and agreeable, that I am recompensed for his loss, whatever damage the rest of the world suffer by it.

It pleases me to find you so often returning to a subject that most people take so much pains to avoid. If immortality is the pride and happiness of human nature, why should it not be mentioned with the same gaiety with which we talk of other agreeable things? The other world is at least a greater novelty than this; nor is it such a glorious round of action, to eat, to drink, and sleep, that people should have an aversion to think, if not to try, what a variety of enjoyments a future life will give them. But to forget this is the design of all the thoughtless amusements the wit of man can invent. What Monsieur Pascal says is perfectly just.

L'or
hommes
passé-
le sent
ter en p
L'ame
peu de
voyage
dure la
si fort,
qu'à le
& de p
soy-mém
tieux sa
pechent
I will
going to
trouble
essay: a
grave a
man thi
good an
circumst

* This i
the trifi
aim is to
it, or rat
this small
soul is fen
She knows
eternity, a
for the voy
so strange
low to lot
ing oblig
and therefo
to let this
reflection,
the notice

*L'origine de toutes les occupations tumultuaires des hommes, & de tout ce qu'on appelle divertissement ou passe-tems, est en effet que d'y laisser passer le tems sans le sentir, ou le plutôt sans le sentir soy-même, & d'éviter en perdant cette partie de la vie le dégoût intérieur. L'ame est jetté dans le corps pour y faire un séjour de peu de durée. Elle sçait que ce n'est qu'un passage à un voyage éternel, & qu'elle n'a que le peu de tems que dure la vie pour s'y préparer. Mais ce peu, le commode si fort, & l'embarasse si étrangement, qu'elle ne songe qu'à le perdre. Celui est une peine insupportable à vivre & de penser à soy. Ainsi tout son soin est de s'oublier soy-même, & de laisser couler le tems si court & si précieux sans réflexion, en s'occupant des choses qui l'empêchent d'y penser *.*

I will stop here, or you will certainly think I am going to transcribe the whole book, to save you the trouble of throwing away your money on a moral essay: and perhaps, Madam, you may not be in so grave a humour as when you wrote last; for all human things are changeable, and have sometimes good and sometimes evil dispositions; and in what circumstance this will find you is an uncertainty to,

Madam,

Your most obedient,
and most humble servant.

* This is the ground of all the tumultuary business, of all the trifling diversions, amongst men; in which our general aim is to make the time pass off our hands without feeling it, or rather without feeling ourselves, and by getting rid of this small portion of life to avoid inward disgust. The soul is sent into the body to be the sojourner of a few days. She knows that this is but a stop till she may embark for eternity, and that a small space is allowed her to prepare for the voyage; and yet this moment which remains does so strangely oppress and perplex her, that she only studies how to lose it: she feels an intolerable burthen in being obliged to live with herself, and think of herself; and therefore her principal care is to forget herself, and to let this short and precious moment pass away without reflection, by amusing herself with things which prevent the notice of its speed.

L E T T E R VI.

To the same.

YOU will find, Madam, to your grief, I have not hired the carrier to lose the large paper you sent me; but I have certainly more compassion for you than to fill it. One would think you intended I should write a Western Journal, and give you a full and true relation of all the ghosts and apparitions that are seen in the county of —; for these are the only remarkable events which happen here.

These are the regions of Sleep and Repose, not of Action. For my own part, I neither hope nor fear, contrive nor design, any thing that relates to this mortal life; but am as much at rest as the people that are sleeping in their sepulchres. I am in some doubt whether I belong to the society of the living or the dead, and am ready to ask myself,

Is this existence real or a dream?

I cannot persuade myself to wish you any thing but just what you are, a mere earthly creature. It would be too great a disadvantage to find you in a rank of beings superior to mortals. I am so sensible of the distance at present that I cannot wish you in a greater elevation. If I asked any thing, perhaps it would be to set you more on an equality, that I might have an opportunity to convince you how sincere and disinterested my friendship is.

By your account, L— B— lives a very unactive and inglorious life. Though he has been so long as four months in the world, he has had so few adventures, that I can but just stretch my invention to compose half a song for him:

With
ous, for
meanin
satisfac
and am

Madam

YOU
lan
given m
is past, a
happy t

When

You c
and true
nothing
able ligh
concile y

With
vantage
pride of
virtue, l

Thou pretty, smiling, guiltless thing!
Of thee what can the Muses sing?
Unless they speak in prophesy,
How great a hero thou shalt be;
Thy country's patron, and the grace
Of ———'s long illustrious race.

With verse and prose, reflections gay and serious, some with a meaning, and others without any meaning at all, I am at last, to your unspeakable satisfaction, come to an end of this fine epistle, and am going to subscribe myself,

Madam,

Your's, &c.

L E T T E R VII.

To the same.

Madam,

YOUR concern for Lord ——— is the most melancholy circumstance in the account you have given me of his death. The toil, the long fatigue, is past, and all to come is rest and endless joy. The happy spirit is for ever wandering now

———through boundless realms of bliss,
Where Pleasure blossoms with eternal spring.

You express yourself with so much good sense, and true greatness of mind, on this occasion, that nothing could set your character in a more agreeable light: the death of your friends seems to reconcile your thoughts to the unknown regions.

With regard to yourself, it might be no disadvantage to quit the world so early. To die in the pride of life, and all the splendour of youthful virtue, has something far more glorious than to

languish out the dregs of life in the exercise of no virtue but patience.

You find, Madam, I am persuading you to die with great composure: I suppose you think yourself obliged to me for resigning my friends to their destiny with so much calmness and submission; but really it is in mere charity to you: for if you grow wise so soon, I cannot imagine how you will fill up the tedious round of threescore years and ten, if Heaven, for the happiness of mankind, should continue your life to that date.

How many people would suspend their part in the joys of Paradise till the heavens are no more, for the most trifling of these amusements which you despise? But while you think so justly of this world and the next, I must confess, the manner of life to which your quality confines you excites my compassion. Indeed, you may dispense with me for practising this height of charity, while you are the object of almost every body's envy. But be as happy as the world can make you, it is all but sleeping and dreaming, and, as Mr Law says, "being amused with a vain succession of shadows."

This quotation, you may imagine, is to show my great reading. When I am writing to you, I would indeed shine with every advantage; but the height of my ambition is being,

Madam,

Your's, &c.

Mad
I FIN.
mad
tort an
rested c
ply, I s
utmost
that yo
never fl

At pr
you: th
as much
ander t
take of
enough
advanta

I wou
from my
pear to
is the fo
given m
an hero
always f
they rea
My le
now gla

L E T T E R VIII.

To the same.

Madam,

I FIND it is generally a very selfish motive that made me write to you, my design being to extort an answer. If you had but so much disinterested charity as to write without expecting a reply, I should certainly receive the favour with the utmost gratitude and modesty: however, it is well that you indulge my talent of impertinence, and never strictly insist on common sense.

At present I cannot entertain myself, much less you: the creation seems to want variety, and I am as much inclined to cry for more worlds as Alexander the Great was, only my uneasiness is for the sake of novelty; for I have little ambition, not enough to leave you in an error, though to my own advantage.

I would not maliciously lessen myself, nor detract from my own good qualities, which certainly appear to my view in their full magnitude; yet such is the force of truth, that I must confess you have given me a sort of imaginary character, and I am an heroine of your own making; as great minds always suppose they find in others the same virtues they really possess themselves.

My letter is of a convenient length, and you will now gladly dismiss

Your most humble servant.

LETTERS TO THE AUTHOR.

BY ANOTHER HAND.

LETTER I.

I WAS so far from thinking your letter the effect of the spleen, that I am persuaded it was written in one of your gayest intervals: to a mind turned like your's, the thoughts of death must be all serene and agreeable. I fancy you will be pleased with these lines, which Monsieur Menard ordered to be written over his closet-door.

• Las d'esperer et de me plaindre,
De l'amour des grands et du sort,
C'est ici que j'attens la mort,
Sans la desirer, ou la craindre.

C'est bien le caractère, le plus beau, & le plus rare, qu'on peut avoir: "This character is the best, finest, "and most rare, that we can possibly have." But the eternal hurry that attends an exalted station needs a higher pitch of virtue to keep the mind in a proper temper to meet our dissolution than is generally attained; and dying in pomp gives a thousand terrors to the fatal period.

Had I been born some humble villager,
And in a peaceful cottage pass'd my days,
Far from the guilty pageantry of courts,
In innocence my life had calmly pass'd,
And with a smile I might resign my breath.

• Weary'd with hoping and bewailing,
For love of Fortune and the Great,
No wish or fear of Death prevailing,
Its coming patiently I wait,

The world has, I think, as few charms for me as for most people of my age: but I must own I feel a sort of reluctance to part with every thing below, and a dread to enter on those unknown regions, from whence none return to tell us what they find.

Betwixt the whistling of the wind and the roaring of a fall of water I have at present a solemn and agreeable concert, and cannot help addressing myself with Mira to the Winter.

To thee my gently drooping head I bend,
Thy sigh my sister, and thy tear my friend;
On thee I muse, and in thy hast'ning sun
See life expiring ere 'tis well begun:
Thy sick'ning ray and venerable gloom
Show life's last scene, the solitary tomb.

Adieu,

CLEORA.

LETTER II.

WHITHER shall I direct for you? Are you still an inhabitant of the earth, or ascended to the ethereal regions? Am I addressing a mortal or an immortal spirit? In what language must I speak? If you are still in this world, I am determined to molest you; and I hope this letter will find you in the midst of some agreeable reverie, and chase the gaudy vision from your fancy.

I cannot praise your virtue in becoming a recluse, and getting a victory by a cowardly flight: I would have you raise your character, by venturing into this wicked Town, and by despising the world in the midst of dazzling temptations.

To read a treatise of devotion instead of a new play, and preserve your serious temper surround-

ed with vanity and diversions, would be a more heroical part than enjoying an inglorious tranquillity among purling streams and flowery meadows.

Besides, here would be the addition of mortification to heighten your virtue: for you would scarce find the crying of *small-coal* as harmonious a sound as the warbling of nightingales; nor the smell of *sea-coal* smoke as fragrant as the breath of opening violets and primroses.

But my comparisons are so much to the advantage of the country that I am afraid you will suspect my advice to be the effect of envy; and I had as good throw off a disguise, and own that at present my way of living is a series of impertinence; and were it to continue,

Far rather would I in some humble cell,
Distant from all that's gay, for ever dwell,
Than waste my flying hours, and thus divide
My time 'twixt Folly, Calumny, and Pride;
Still trifling, thus debase the gift of Sense,
And live the slave of dull Impertinence.

I have not yet had the curiosity to see the new Opera: the weather is so hot that I think shady groves and crystal streams more refreshing than a crowded theatre. Indeed, the Town was never more disagreeable to me than now: I wish I knew whether it proceeds from being more wise or more dull; I am afraid the latter: for as to an increase of wisdom, I cannot say I am sensible of it in any other instance.

The greatest happiness, perhaps, that can be attained in this world is only insipid indolence, and not any real pleasure. How different does it prove from those gay visions that youth forms to itself when it first launches out into the flattering ocean! how soon do tempests of trouble and

confusion
desire of
mankind
in the far
the only
another;
gentle str
plation o

I BEG
paper
ter, for f
Madam a
and track
me to fil

You w
when my
trees, an
two or th
not assur
it gives n
van scene
cret art t
ance.

I have
holly; b
grow just
mixed wi
shrubs, i
fect wild

The fa
me often

confusion rise, while nothing is so common as the desire of long life ; and yet how small a part of mankind would care to trace back their lives again in the same steps they did before ! Though perhaps the only variety would be to change one folly for another ; to quit the Playhouse for Ombre, or the gentle strains of the Opera for the serious contemplation of their own dear persons in a looking-glass.

I am your's,

CLEORA.

LETTER III.

I BEG you not to write any more on Lilliput paper. I am almost afraid to open your letter, for fear of finding, after a respectful margin, *Madam* at the top, and your name at the bottom, and trackless wastes of blank paper between, for me to fill up at my leisure.

You will be surpris'd to find that, at a time when my health is declining, I should be planting trees, and laying out walks, as if I thought I had two or three hundred years to enjoy them. I need not assure you I have no such expectations ; but it gives me an innocent delight to form these sylvan scenes in an irregular manner, and with a secret art to imitate Nature in her negligent appearance.

I have no giants in yew, nor tigers or birds in holly ; but instead of them firs and pines, that grow just as Nature designed them ; and so intermixed with woodbines, syringas, and other flowery shrubs, that in a few months they will be a perfect wilderness of sweets.

The satisfaction I take in this undertaking makes me often fancy I am not sincere in my thoughts

of soon leaving it : I am as busy in my garden, and as much surfeited with the *Grande Monde*, as ever Dioclesian was.

*Sento qualche stupidità che me impedisce di godere una vita nella corte piena di splendore e cerimonia, tanto che quella chi si trova nella campagna senza gloria et senza turbenza **

Every plant that flourishes gives me a pleasure, and every drooping tree infects me with languishing ; I watch every decay among my flowers as a celebrated beauty would do gray hairs or wrinkles.

I have two or three sheep that perplex me as much as le Berger Extravagant's flock did him ; and were I to indulge my rural delights, and return no more to the noisy Town, I should fall into the most soothing and agreeable madness imaginable.

Come, Amaryllis, come, and with me share
The blooming woodbines, and the fragrant air,
Together o'er the flow'ry walks we'll rove,
Or sit beneath the shelter of the grove :
While flocks upon the hills around us bleat,
And Echoes to the streams their voice repeat.
Among the willows in a gloomy shade
By Nature form'd, there rushes a cascade ;
Upon its banks you, undisturb'd, may ly,
While Contemplation wasts you to the sky.

CLEORA.

LETTER IV.

PEOPLE seem at present more busily employed in preparing for the King's birth-day than for their own last ; and appear to be in greater an-

* I feel within me a kind of stupidity which hinders me to enjoy that happiness at a court, taken up with splendour and ceremony, that I relish in a country life free from pomp and hurry.

xiety for
seat in

I was
followe
letter w
of mort
that ne
of the r
give me
lot of n
grave ;
us all is

But t
human
often a
thought
thought
manner
to keep

I cann
being en
ing (an
ter stran
our actio
gine we
to judge
imagine
always t
else, tha
we could
the least
ment, or

You w
me to wr
sure the i

xiety for a seat in the dancing-room than for a seat in paradise.

I was last night with ———; a barge of music followed us; but, in the midst of this gaiety, your letter was not the only thing that put me in mind of mortality: I had such a violent pain in my head, that neither the wit of the company, the softness of the music, nor the beauty of the evening, could give me any sincere delight.——If pleasure be the lot of man, it must be in something beyond the grave; for, on this side, constant experience tells us all is vanity.

But this confession has hardly any influence on human conduct: for people in a high rank must often act against their reason to avoid being thought unfashionable; and for fear of being thought mad by the modish world, must act in a manner which they are sensible is being truly so, to keep in vogue with their polite contemporaries.

I cannot forbear thinking with myself, that if a being endowed with reason and a capacity of judging (an inhabitant of another planet, and an utter stranger to our nature) could take a view of our actions, he would be at a loss what to imagine we were; and had he no informer, but were to judge by our conduct, he would certainly either imagine that we were a species who were insured always to live in the world we now inhabit; or else, that after enjoying ourselves here as long as we could, we were to be insensible for ever, without the least expectation of a future judgment, punishment, or reward.

You would hardly make an apology for desiring me to writ to you, if you knew how much pleasure the injunction gives to

Your's unalterably,

CLEORA.

LETTER V.

THE news of my Lord ———'s death has been so great a shock to me, that I want all your arguments against long life to reconcile me to the shortness of his at the latter-end of seventy years. I have much ado to think that he did not die too young, since he had strength enough to endure the most exquisite torments. I loved him most sincerely as a relation, and esteemed him as a most valuable and faithful friend. My thoughts are continually employed about him, and I grieve for my own loss, and rejoice at his gain in the same moment, and cannot forbear following him with my speculations to the mansions of eternal Peace, and inquiring, with Tickell, in his verses on the death of Mr Addison,

In what new region to the just assign'd,
 What new employments please th' unbody'd mind?
 A winged Virtue, through th' ethereal sky,
 From world to world unweary'd does he fly?
 Or curious trace the long laborious maze
 Of Heav'n's decrees, where wond'ring angels gaze?
 Does he delight to hear bold seraphs tell
 How Michael battled, and the Dragon fell?
 Or, mix'd with milder cherubim, to glow
 In hymns of Love?—

I cannot help fancying how his soul is charmed to find itself at liberty, and no longer chained to an infirm body, which continually clogged it in all its operations. How is he transported to be admitted to the presence of God his Saviour! and with what delight (if we may be allowed to conjecture that he remembers her) will he see his wife, for whom he has shed so many tears, in all the pomp

of cele
 upon t
 treasur
 the pla
 deep pl
 listen t
 golden
 and hov
 his Sav
 to purc
 When
 I blame
 lament
 and the
 especiall
 nour, fu
 But I an
 kind, an

YOU rea
 in me, a
 have for
 my age a
 you fancy
 good und
 judgment
 but, alas
 proceeds

of celestial glory! With what pleasure will he gaze upon the skies, while they unfold their sparkling treasures! and with what joy and wonder observe the planets in their courses, and look into all the deep philosophy of heaven! With what attention listen to the songs of angels, while they tune their golden lyres to the praise of God and of the Lamb! and how will his heart overflow with gratitude to his Saviour, while he reflects on what he suffered to purchase these pleasures for him!

When I consider the advantages of his change I blame my grief: and yet who can forbear to lament the best of friends, the honestest of men, and the most agreeable companion that ever was? especially in an age like this, where so little honour, friendship, and sincerity, are to be found. But I am not going to write a satire upon mankind, and therefore will say no more, but that

I am faithfully your's,

CLEORA.

L E T T E R VI.

To CLORINDA.

YOU ask me, my dear Clorinda, what is the reason of the deep melancholy you observe in me, and are amazed to see how little relish I have for the things which amuse other people of my age and quality. Your partiality for me makes you fancy that my indifference is the result of a good understanding, and that the force of my judgment has been able to subdue my passions; but, alas! how are you mistaken! my melancholy proceeds from the irregularity of my affections;

love, vanity, distrust, and repentance, conspire to rack me; and,

When I look back on all my former days,
The only comfort the review affords
Is, that they're past——

For through their course I cannot recollect
One free from sorrow, guilt, or disappointment:
Yet heedless still, through the same paths I stray,
And rashly venture on the dang'rous road;
With open eyes, like one asleep, I walk,
And drink the cup, although I know 'tis poison'd.
Why am I led thus captive by my will?
While Reason, faithful guide, for ever warns
My drowsy soul to shun impending danger.
This night may be my last; I ne'er again
May see the dawning of another morn:
Shall I forego the joys of heav'n, to sooth
A wayward fancy, or destructive passion?
Ah, no! let ev'ry faculty unite
To break the yoke! Reason, resume thy sway,
And calm these wild disorders of my breast!
Whisper thy sacred dictates to my heart,
And bend it to th' observance of thy laws!
Inspire my soul with ev'ry heav'nly thought,
And show me Wisdom's paths! direct my steps,
Nor leave me thus benighted?

There is not in nature a greater contradiction than my thoughts and actions, and it is impossible for me to account why they are so: I pursue the pleasures of the world at the same time that I know them to be fleeting and worthless. I distract myself about the opinion of the public, though I despise the injustice of its censures. I cannot forbear repining at my unhappy circumstances, in suffering myself to be tormented with the ingratitude of some whom I thought my friends, nor weeping, while I indulge a hopeless passion; though I know that

Qui
And
The
But
No
Of

And y
patien
correc
out pr
son, a
judgm
Afte
that I
ry; th
folly fi
to lull
spair o
of Re
always
humbl
firm re
I am
in the
I am,

My d
Y
many

Quickly will my glass of life be run,
And with it all my joys and sorrows gone:
Then I no more shall feel Love's cruel fire,
But cold and peaceful to the grave retire;
No more shall weep for the licentious wrongs
Of judgments rash, or scourge of stand'rous tongues.

And yet, not even this reflection can arm me with patience. I am uneasy with my faults without correcting them; and in love with my duty without practising it. I act contrary to my highest reason, and turn rebel to the authority of my own judgment.

After this account of me, you will not wonder that I retire as much as I can from noise and hurry; though no shade is gloomy enough to hide my folly from my eyes, nor any retreat calm enough to lull my passions. However, I do not yet despair of conquering these vexations by the assistance of Religion, and the grace of that God who will always be found by those who seek him, in an humble sense of their own unworthiness, and a firm reliance upon his mercy.

I am never in so whimsical a situation of mind, in the midst of all my absurdities, as to forget that I am, by a thousand obligations,

Your faithful friend,
and obliged servant,
IRIS.

LETTER VII.

To ALMIRA.

My dear Almira,

YOU will be extremely afflicted, though not surprised, to hear that, after languishing so many months, the unhappy Teraminta yesterday

expired in my arms. The day before her death she ordered every body but me to leave the room, and desired me to sit down by her bed-side; then, taking me by the hand, she spoke to me in the following manner:

I see, my faithful Emilia, that you are sinking under the affliction which you suffer, to find that a few hours will deprive you not only of a sincere and tender friend, but of a person whom your partiality inclines you to believe has some merit. I cannot leave you under this mistake, and go out of the world with the guilt of deceiving you; it is not possible for me to let you waste your tears for a wretch who is unworthy of them: yet let what I have suffered for my crimes induce you to compassion, and my hard fate warn you to guard against the first glimmerings of a guilty passion; for that has been my ruin. You know I was married extremely young, and upon the fashionable unhappy views of estate and titles. However, my husband's merit, (which to my eternal confusion I must ever acknowledge), joined to his fondness for me, gained so far upon my heart, that if I had not all the passion that attends love, I had all the tenderness of an exalted friendship, for him. In this calm state I passed the first six years of our marriage, and had several children by him; but then his public employment obliged him to inquire for a person to assist him in the discharge of his office: he had a young man recommended to him for that purpose, whom he took into his house: he had ten thousand good qualities; he was just three-and-twenty, and perfectly beautiful, at least to me he appeared so: but why should I describe him to you, or strive to conceal the temptation, while I own the guilt? You know the destroyer of my peace and his own; it is the wretched Alonzo.

He had
gan to
his nar
tioned
ly with
few mo
up to h
at this
my fam
full for
nights
down.
in vain
retrieva
more li
and, to
melanch
always
ing, as
court be
stars, w
and wif
naries,
criminal
I chance
stood lon
something
round I
about to
holding i
an air of
However
him wha
to hope
insolence
the effect
his miser

He had not been long in the family before I began to have an affection for him that frightened me : his name affected me ; I could not hear him mentioned without trembling, or see him unexpectedly without becoming as pale as ashes, and in a few months I found my heart was entirely given up to him. What eloquence can express my grief at this discovery ? My vows, my husband's merit, my family, my fame, now appeared to me in their full force, and joined to rack me. I passed my nights in tears, and rose more weary than I lay down. I flew to religious books for succour, but in vain ; I had neglected the danger till it was irretrievable. I wandered in my house and gardens more like a guilty ghost than a living creature : and, to add to my distress, I observed an unusual melancholy in the face of my dear Alonzo : he was always in my way, alone and pensive. One evening, as I was standing just without the door in the court before my house observing the moon and stars, which were shining in their full splendour, and wishing myself above those glittering luminaries, that I might be no longer subject to that criminal passion which rendered my life a burthen, I chanced to put my hands behind me. I had not stood long in that posture before I thought I felt something gently touch my hand, and looking round I found it to be Alonzo ; who seeing me about to leave him, took one of my hands, and holding it betwixt his, pressed it to his bosom with an air of tenderness which pierced my very soul. However, I was enough mistress of myself to ask him what behaviour of mine had encouraged him to hope that I would endure so unaccountable an insolence ? He told me, that what he did was not the effect of hope, but of absolute despair ; that his misery was grown to such an height that it

was incapable of receiving any aggravation; and that though he loved me to distraction, he did not even entertain a wish that I should return a passion so much below me; and that if I could forgive the frenzy that had brought him to make this declaration, he would for the future observe an eternal silence. At these words he burst into tears, and I left him with the utmost precipitation, to conceal a tenderness which neither the obligations of my duty, or any other reflection, were strong enough to suppress. I was now sunk to the depth of misery: I had listened to the declaration of a love forbidden by all the laws of Heaven and Earth, and contrary to every principle of virtue which my education had instilled into my soul. I knew not what method to take to free myself and Alonzo from so unhappy a situation. Sometimes I resolved to feign some cause of dislike, and prevail with my husband to discharge him. When I had summoned all my aids of virtue, modesty, and pride, and fancied myself able to make the dreadful proposal, my passion brought back his idea to my heart with all the charms of his mind and person, and represented him not only ruined in his peace, but in his fortune, by my severity. Several months passed in this state of anxiety, and he religiously observed his word, nor ever once mentioned his passion; but at last the disorder of his mind threw him into a fever, and his life was despaired of. Judge what I endured upon this occasion; however, conscious modesty hindered me from going near him in his illness, which lasted almost a fortnight; but at last his youth, and the strength of his constitution, overcame his disease, and he was able to get up the stairs that led to my apartment, and was at the door of it just as I went to call some of the servants. At that mo-

ment e
forbear
his bed
" my m
" to pe
words,
arrived a
which I
tered: I
live for
mazed a
recovere
less roac
tion, till
guilty p
ties with
derstand
inspire,
could no
ments of
from my
to look e
outlived
which I
ways kep
was so h
argument
pardon o
had pers
of our li
the error
three yea
securing e
able to ce
have supp
nel contra
my ingrat

ment every good angel left me, and I could not forbear expressing my joy to find him able to leave his bed. "Alas!" said he, "why do you wish my misery prolonged? Death is my only road to peace, since I am hated by you." These words, joined with the paleness of his looks, disarmed all my resolutions, and I told him a secret which I ought rather to have died than have uttered: I owned my passion, and begged him to live for my sake, if not for his own. He was amazed and overjoyed at this confession, and soon recovered his health. We now went on in a thoughtless road of pleasure, and indulged our mutual passion, till at last he pressed me to give him the most guilty proofs of it; and strengthened his entreaties with all the arguments that so good an understanding, assisted by the powers of Hell, could inspire. But as passionately as I loved him, he could not, with all his eloquence, erase the sentiments of innate virtue, and convictions of religion, from my soul. I was not enough abandoned but to look on adultery as a point of horror not to be outlived; and though I allowed him liberties which I am now convinced were guilty, yet I always kept myself from the last steps of vice, and was so happy, that, instead of my yielding to his arguments, he was convinced by mine, and asked pardon of God and me for the criminal design he had pursued. We now resolved, by the strictness of our lives, to make what amends we could for the errors we had fallen into; and for these last three years have applied ourselves seriously to the seeking of our salvation: but we have never been able to conquer our unhappy passion, though we have suppressed the effects of it. It is this eternal contradiction, joined to the remorse I feel for my ingratitude to the best of husbands, which has

brought me into the condition you see. Happy, if by losing my life I could atone for my injustice! How gentle would my agonies appear, if by their excess I could hope that they would be accepted as part of my punishment? Whatever I could suffer here would be joyful to me, were I sure it could entitle me to mercy hereafter. Here she fell into a swoon, but quickly revived, and lived till next day. About an hour before she died she sent for her husband and children, and took leave of them with great tenderness; and then lying down as if she would sleep, expired in a few minutes. They are in vast affliction for her; but no words can paint the despair of Alonzo; he has neither spoke nor ate since her death, and seems so perfectly stupified, that I fear his senses are gone for ever.

Adieu, my dear Almira! My tears flow so fast that I can write no more.

EMILIA.

LETTER VIII.

By the same hand.

My Lord,

I HAVE at last taken the only means left me to free myself from your importunities, and the weakness of my own heart, which argued but too much on your side. I found my fame, and every other consideration, too light, when weighed in the balance against your love; but the force of religion has turned the scale, and made me resolve to spend the remainder of my weeping days in a convent: it is in that holy retreat that I hope to find the peace which I lost in the world. You cannot be

Torry for
for not
sufficient
into repu
would th
Lordship
which th
ciples, ca
in which
be glad t
fight, I h
fued, and
would be
bed that
of peace a
able liber
family w
tion. W
support y
tenderne
sisters, wh
return, yo
last degre
but surel
sentiment
would be
into a fan
tune; bu
obligation
are, I mu
And thou
as to that
friends, of
light of th
licentious
them, and
think how

Sorry for this resolution when you consider of it : for not all the polite maxims of the present age are sufficient to discountenance virtue, or bring vice into reputation ; or could they prevail in this world, would they be admitted at God's tribunal. Your Lordship may call this Bigotry, or any other name which the levity of your fancy, or modish principles, can inspire you with ; but a day will come in which you will find it sacred truth ; and you will be glad that, by shutting myself for ever from your sight, I hindered you from the guilt you have pursued, and put it out of your power to ruin me. It would be no very pleasing reflection on your death-bed that you had seduced a soul from the paths of peace and virtue ; and, to give yourself a fashionable liberty, had entailed misery and infamy on a family who have served you with zeal and affection. What has my aged father left undone to support your interest in the country ? with what tenderness did my mother educate your two young sisters, who were committed to her care ? And, in return, you would bring their only daughter to the last degree of sin and shame : this may be genteel, but surely it is not noble. How false are your sentiments of honour and justice ! You thought it would be a reflection on your character to marry into a family so much below you in birth and fortune ; but are not ashamed to return a thousand obligations (pardon me, my Lord, for great as you are, I must call them such) with the highest injury. And though you have not succeeded in your guilt as to that, you robbed two ancient servants, nay, friends, of yours, of the joy of their eyes, and delight of their age, their only child ; who by your licentious love is forced to seclude herself from them, and the whole world, for ever. I dread to think how they will support this affliction. I left

a letter on the table to acquaint my mother with my retreat, but concealed the cause, for your sister's sake; since she might, perhaps, resolve to discharge herself from an office which she has executed with so much care, and has produced her so cruel a requital. Let the sorrow you brought upon my parents content you, and do not carry ruin into another family. Why should you employ the finest understanding, and the most graceful person, to promote the cause of Hell? and why must the rank, power, and wealth, which were given you to diffuse happiness all round you, only serve to make you capable of splendid mischief?

I am now in a sanctuary where I cannot be the entertainment of your idle hours, and where the time I spent in listening to you shall now be employed in praying for your reformation; the tears which I have often poured out in vain to dissuade you from your guilty enterprize shall be shed before God for your sins: for though you have used me with the utmost cruelty, your eternal welfare will always be the tenderest concern of

The unhappy ANASTASIA.

LETTER IX.

To LEONORA.

I HAVE been on the very borders of the grave, and have, for several months, endured all the pains and languishments of a dangerous illness; but it has pleased God to restore me to so tolerable a measure of health that I am now able to think and write again; and with what pleasure do I feel myself once more at ease!

How ungrateful are the generality of mankind

while
(when
venien
which
I owed
it. W
terrupt
and fin
tions, I
ved the
were ob
while I
the pea
his dinn
I was i
less on
exchang
humble
How rea
of airy t
deur, to
lish to e
diffuses
ill, the
I found
nor joy
but tur
and wif
diance.
round m
the bird
to sing m
in my ch
When n
might n
of the r
when I
Volum

while they enjoy this blessing! and how seldom (when they are well) do they reflect on the inconvenience and faintness, the weariness and pains, which attend a sick bed! I never was sensible what I owed to God for my health till I came to want it. While my blood flowed with an even uninterrupted course in its channels, and my arteries and sinews were able to perform their several functions, I overlooked that mercy which had contrived them for those operations; but as soon as they were obstructed I was sensible of their value; and, while I sickened at the sight of my food, I envied the peasant, whose health enabled him to earn his dinner with the sweat of his brow; and while I was in torment in a stately apartment, and restless on a bed of down, how joyfully would I have exchanged conditions with the hind, who, in an humble cottage, was sleeping on sheaves of straw! How readily would I have parted with all the vanity of airy titles, all the advantages of riches and grandeur, to purchase health! Health, which gives relish to every enjoyment, and, like the rays of light, diffuses beauty upon every object. When I was ill, the beauty of the creation was effaced to me; I found no longer harmony in the sounds of music, nor joy while the sun poured his meridian glory; but turned my eyes from the intolerable lustre, and wished for the shades of Night to veil his radiance. I had no pleasure in seeing every thing round me flourish while I withered and decayed; the birds that warbled near my window seemed to sing my funeral dirge, and every fly that buzzed in my chamber, sounded like an alarm to judgment. When night came, I considered that, probably, I might never see day-light again till the morning of the resurrection dawned upon the earth; and when I was drowsy, and inclining to sleep, I ima-

gined that I should, perhaps, never wake till I heard the voice of the archangel, and the sound of the last trumpet, nor lift up my head till I saw the Son of man coming in the clouds with power and great glory. This near prospect of death and judgment has put the world, and all its gaudy vanities, into a just light, and has convinced me of the falsity of human comforts : and I have reason to bless God, who has given me such an opportunity of seeing things as they really are ; and by making me sensible of the small consolation that all the earth can afford in the time of illness, and at the hour of death has directed my eyes and hopes to Heaven, and made me know the value of those hours which were too often wasted in guilt or folly : and, believe me, Leonora, you will some time or other be sensible of this important truth. You are not more secure of years to come than I appeared to be before this illness ; and will find the splendour of a court, and all the flatteries of life, miserable comforters upon a sick bed : the pleasures of this world will withdraw, and nothing remain with you but a sense of your past conduct ; and when you find yourself ready to quit the stage, you will have no concern about any thing but how you have acted your part.

I am still very weak, though perfectly at ease ; and I could be satisfied to remain so always, rather than hazard being again a slave to my passions and pleasures. I am, with all imaginable sincerity,

Your most faithful

DIANA.

I TO
obli
the We
no com
of his
at meal
ful : an
in the p
amusem
I can
which I
ding ove
an extre
spect of
was full
in somep
it was m
winding
and rese
the slowe
of this s
the diffic
that side
and so ro
unpassabl
my horse
made a s
the foot c
there inte
sycamore
the spring

L E T T E R X.

To LYSANDER.

ITOLD you, some time since, that my affairs would oblige me to pass this summer at my estate in the West; I have been at it these six weeks. I brought no company hither but Cleomedon, who is so fond of his studies that I seldom see him, unless it be at meals, but then he is always sprightly and cheerful: and at other times I entertain myself either in the park or gardens, which afford me so much amusement that I never find the day too long.

I cannot forbear repeating to you an adventure which I met with a few days ago. — As I was riding over some of my farms, I came to the brow of an extreme high hill, from whence I had the prospect of the most beautiful valley imaginable; it was full of woods, and watered with a large river; in some places it run very broad and straight, in others it was more contracted, and flowed in a thousand windings; sometimes it was lost among the woods, and rose again with fresh beauty as it run through the flowery lawns. I was so charmed with the sight of this sylvan scene that I longed to be in it; but the difficulty was how to get down the hill; for that side next the valley was almost perpendicular, and so rocky and covered with wood that it seemed unpassable. However, I dismounted, and, leading my horse, found a narrow winding, by which I made a shift to get to the bottom of the hill; at the foot of which was a delightful plain, here and there interspersed with spreading oaks, beech and sycamore trees. Here I had the pleasure to observe the spring of the river that watered that beautiful

valley; it gushes out of the side of the rock, and, after falling from one clift to another a great height, runs even with the grass through the plains and woods. I now got on horseback again, and following the course of the river about three or four furlongs I came to a low house, behind which there was a plat of trees, and before a little court, which had no other fence than a laurel hedge breast-high. There was a little wicket which stood open, and the neatness of the place tempted me to go in; which I did with the better assurance, because I imagined, by the appearance and size of the house, that it was not inhabited by any persons of distinction. I crossed the court without seeing any body, and came into a hall, the neatness of which is not to be described. But I own I was surprised to see a harpsichord, upon which lay some music books. I had the curiosity to look into them, and found some of them were Opera airs, but the greater part hymns and anthems. There lay on the table two large folios of maps, and upon the ground I observed a pair of very fine globes. A furniture so different from what I expected made me uncertain whether I should follow my curiosity, which led me to go up a staircase that was at one end of the hall, or go back without disturbing the owners of the house, who I now began to believe were of a different rank from what I at first imagined; and yet it was inconceivable to me how any persons of distinction should be in such a house. My curiosity prevailed, and I went up: but when I came near the top of the stairs I heard a person reading with great justness, in a clear voice, which seemed to be a woman's. I stopped a little to listen to her, and at last turning on my right hand, I observed a door which stood half open, from whence I imagined

the vo
and co
fifty,
ful yo
flowers
white
ticoats
like the
air of
saw. S
dark ha
ginable
have p
young
possible
flaxen,
any po
her eye
she had
would
consider
who see
up, and
however
"Mada
"would
founded
make an
the elder
so benign
courage
ask a tho
swered,
"ment,
"to see
"ment
were in;

the voice came. I drew near it without any noise, and could see a grave well-looking woman of about fifty, who was reading aloud to two very beautiful young ones, who were at work, embroidering flowers on white silk: they were dressed alike in white sattin waistcoats, and brown lutestring petticoats, and upon their heads fine laced caps, made like those of the common peasants: they had an air of innocence and modesty greater than I ever saw. She who appeared the elder of the two had dark hair, and the most blooming complexion imaginable; she was tall, and finely shaped, and might have passed for an inimitable beauty, had not the young creature who sat by her showed that it was possible even to surpass her. Her hair was almost flaxen, and her skin could scarce be equalled by any poetical simile; she had large blue eyes, and her eyebrows and eyelashes were a dark brown; she had a sweetness in her countenance which would have disarmed a tiger of its rage. I had considered them but a few moments when she who seemed the elder of the young women looked up, and seemed surprised at the sight of a stranger: however, she rose with great civility, and said, "Madam, here is a gentleman, who, I believe, would speak with you." I then was so confounded, that I neither knew how to retire or make an excuse for so unaccountable a visit: but the eldest of the ladies asked me to come in, with so benign and cheerful an aspect, that it gave me courage to own the occasion of my intrusion, and ask a thousand pardons for it. To which she answered, "That my curiosity was its own punishment, since it had made me take so much pains to see what was so little worth it as her retirement." I had now time to view the room they were in; it was hung to the top of the chairs with

fine Indian matting, above which, all round the room, were shelves filled with books; and, upon looking into them, I found them to be an admirable collection of history, divinity, and travels: there were a few books of the best philosophy, and some plays. There were upon stands several basons of flowers; and, in short, every thing was so elegant and charming, that I began to fancy myself in an enchanted habitation, and could not forbear expressing my desire to know how people of so extraordinary a genius came to live in so very retired a manner; which the elderly lady perceiving, told me, that if I had patience she would give me a faithful account of it. She said her husband was the heir of a noble family; that his name was Theanor, by whom she had two daughters, which were the young women I saw; that her husband died when the eldest was betwixt eight and nine years old, and left great debts: in vain did she apply to his rich relations, they would not assist her; so that she found herself either obliged to alter her way of living or leave his debts unpaid; which, though the laws did not force her to satisfy, she thought herself bound to do by all the rules of justice and honour. She therefore discharged all her servants except two maids, and an ancient clergyman, whom she kept to instruct her daughters. With this small family she retired to this house, where she said she had lived upwards of fifteen years. She paid her husband's debts in the first seven; but had found so much peace in that solitude that she was loath to quit it, and had the pleasure to find both her daughters in the same mind. I could not forbear asking how they amused themselves in so absolute a retreat, and in what manner they divided the day. In answer to which she told me, that indeed they seldom went abroad;

and
one o
the l
"
" litt
" I n
" we
" fast
" the
" I a
" bou
" we
" affe
" wit
" dra
" deve
" dies
" Her
" dres
" play
" we c
" up l
" while
" till f
" ly, a
" God,
" I tol
" they
" to m
" from
" They
on looki
ter cove
this sud
occasion
" unhap
" imagin

and that when she had given me an account of one day, she told me their whole course of life for the last fifteen years

"As soon as we rise," said she, "we meet in a little chapel below stairs, where the clergyman I mentioned to you reads prayers to us, and we sing a psalm. After this, we have our breakfast, and my daughters amuse themselves with their music or painting, as they like best, while I am busied with the affairs of my family. About eleven o'clock we go into a room, where we prepare medicines for the poor, who cannot afford better help, and there have a press filled with clothes for them of all sorts; and in the drawers under are Bibles, and other books of devotion, that while we take care of their bodies their souls may not be entirely neglected. Here we spend our time till we are ready to dress for dinner: after dinner, my daughters play on the harpsichord, and sing, or sometimes we only converse, till we have a mind to come up hither, where one of us constantly reads while the others work. In the evening we walk till supper; after which, we call our little family, and end the day as we begun it, in praising God, and imploring his protection."

I told her, "I was no longer surpris'd that they liked their way of living, since it appeared to me to be such as must entirely secure them from all kinds of discontent."

They none of them answered to this; and, upon looking up, I saw the face of the eldest daughter covered with tears. I expressed my concern at this sudden alteration, and begged to know the occasion of it. "Alas!" said her mother, "this unhappy girl is more to be pitied than you imagine; and it is only on her account that I

“ feel sorrow. About five years ago she fell de-
 “ perately in love with a young man, who was
 “ equally so with her : but the misfortune was,
 “ that he was not only much below her in his for-
 “ tune, but of a family which are notorious for their
 “ wickedness, though he is not so himself ; for his
 “ mother, who was perfectly virtuous, had in-
 “ stilled into him all the principles of piety and
 “ morality. They had long had a mutual tender-
 “ ness before I perceived it ; but when I did, and
 “ found how much Rosella’s heart was fixed, it
 “ afflicted me so that I fell into a deep melan-
 “ choly, which ended in a dangerous sickness, and
 “ I was given over by my physicians. I then told
 “ Rosella the cause of my illness, and advised her
 “ against a marriage, the apprehensions of which
 “ had, in all probability, cost me my life. She
 “ fell on her knees by my bed-side, and, bathing
 “ my hands with her tears, begged I would en-
 “ deavour to recover ; for if some body was to be
 “ the victim of her unhappy passion, she was re-
 “ solved it should be herself, since death would be
 “ less terrible to her than offending me. I re-
 “ joiced, and was surprised at her compliance, and
 “ hoped her affections had not been so firmly
 “ rooted as I since found. When I began to re-
 “ cover, she begged leave to writ to Alphonso,
 “ (for that was the name of her lover) and give
 “ him an account of the promise she had made,
 “ and the reasons which forced her to it. He re-
 “ ceived the news with inexpressible grief, and
 “ the next day left his father’s house ; to which
 “ he has never yet returned, nor has any body
 “ heard of him. I have been so much touched
 “ with my daughter’s sufferings, and the patience
 “ with which she endured them, without ever up-
 “ braiding me as the cause of them, that I now

“ wit
 “ tha
 “ filia
 “ ago
 relatio
 compa
 I ow
 ry of E
 that ch
 Melissa
 daught
 I sta
 extrem
 ture.

From
 THI

"with as ardently as she does to see him return;
"that I may have the pleasure of rewarding her
"filial piety, by giving her hand where she long
"ago placed her heart." She could not end this
relation without tears, in which her daughters ac-
companied her.

I own I was moved with compassion at the sto-
ry of Rosella, and cannot take my thoughts from
that charming retirement, or forget the beauty of
Melissa, which was the name of the younger
daughter.

I staid till it was dark, and then took my leave,
extremely delighted with so uncommon an adven-
ture. Adieu.

BELLAMOUR.

From the Apollo Press, by
THE MARTINS, *June 1776.*

END OF VOLUME FIRST.



